

inces had been forcibly removed, the element of Greek culture was becoming more pervasive. And, as such, it could provide a still firmer bond of unity in the empire. It was then that the question of ethnicity began to take on some significance, not only among the Slavs—who made use of Orthodoxy and especially the Slavonic liturgy to strengthen their own emerging ethnic feelings—but among the Greeks themselves. To the latter, however, ethnicity or "national" consciousness was as yet of secondary importance, because the power of the state was still overriding and Greek culture had become dominant in the empire.

Progressively, however, by the time of our third period, and especially after the Latin occupation of Constantinople when the Byzantine state itself was destroyed—despite efforts of the successor states of Nicaea and Epirus to foster the illusion of an uninterrupted continuity of empire—relations between church and state, and in particular the question of religious conformity, began to take on a different aspect. Henceforth, even with the reestablishment of Byzantine power at Constantinople in 1261, because of the gravely growing weakness of the state, the Byzantine people had to find something besides Orthodoxy, an element that was theirs alone and that could provide them with a feeling of identity or individuality as a people. This became necessary not only because they shared Orthodoxy with another—in fact larger—ethnic group, the Slavs but, much more, in order to differentiate themselves from the hated Latins. This was all the more imperative since the very heads of their own state, the Palaeologan emperors, were continually seeking to effect ecclesiastical union with the Roman church, and some of their own leading intellectuals, the prounionists or *Latinophrones*, were, in the minds of the common people, blurring the differences between Greek and Latin to the extent that the East might even become Latinized.⁴²

This new element, which emerged to undergird the people's dependence on the church, was found in the *ancient* Greek cultural tradition or heritage which, though it had begun earlier to grow in significance, was now finally made to coincide exactly with the Byzantine attachment to Orthodoxy. This is not to affirm that the state, or rather the idea of the Byzantine state, had lost all importance or potency. What in large part made for the weakening of imperial authority was, to be sure, the marked diminution of imperial territory. But at the same time the authority of the patriarch, despite, or

in some ways almost because of, this territorial contraction, continued to increase, especially among the Slavs. Striking evidence for the culmination of this transposed relationship of the power of church and state, patriarch and emperor, where now the church became, rather, the protector of the state, is to be seen in the extreme statement made in 1395 by the Greek patriarch Anthony. In response to Russian disparagement of the by now almost nonexistent and decentralized authority of the Byzantine emperor, he replied pointedly to the grand prince of Moscow: "There can be no Christian church without the Emperor."⁴³

In times when state power was supreme, the church could, theoretically, demand and secure conformity to the one religion on the grounds that otherwise the state would be divided and therefore weakened. But pragmatically it could and did sometimes shut its eyes in exceptional cases such as those of the Jews and Armenians. With regard to heretics such as the Nestorians, Monophysites, Paulicians, and Bogomils, however, whose numbers and proselytizing activities posed a grave danger to the very existence of the state, the thesis of conformity was, theoretically as well as in practice, insisted upon by the Byzantine authorities—often to the point of severe persecution. In the third or last period, as we have seen, the positions of church and state were reversed. As the vigor of the state dramatically declined, the church, in order to preserve political and social order, had to become the protector of the state. And the Greek people themselves, so as to bolster both church and state and, above all, to find a genuine ethnic identity of their own in the face of the collapse of empire and society, found new strength in what they believed was unique to them alone, the cultural tradition and heritage of the ancient Greeks.

In all three periods, then, it may be said that religious pluralism was, with certain non-dangerous exceptions, not tolerated in the Byzantine state. In the first period, the state authority maintained religious conformity, as it did in the second, though with certain qualifications. But in the third phase, conformity of religion increasingly coincided with the need for conformity of culture, since the state authority was weakened and the external and internal threats to the empire had become overpowering. It was the coincidence of this religious together with cultural conformity which finally produced what may be called the new, or "modern," Greek nationalism.

The Influences of Byzantine Culture on the Medieval West

It is frequently asserted that from a cultural point of view the chief function of Byzantium was to serve for over one thousand years as the bulwark of Christendom against invading infidel hordes, and in this capacity to preserve for the world the literary and philosophic heritage of ancient Greece.¹ There is no doubt, of course, of the signal service rendered by Byzantium as a preserver of Greek learning. After all, Greek language and literature had virtually disappeared from the German-dominated West of the so-called Dark Ages. But Byzantium was certainly more than a mere passive repository of ancient civilization. On the contrary, as her culture developed, it reflected a remarkable amalgamation not only of the philosophy and literature of Greece but of the religious ideals of Christianity—which in the East underwent a development significantly different from that of the Latin West—and thirdly, of a certain transcendent, mystical quality that may, at least partly, be attributed to the diverse influences of Syria, Egypt, the Jews, and even Persia. These three elements, then, Greco-Roman classicism (including the governmental tradition of Rome), the Byzantine brand of Christianity, and what we may call the Oriental component, were blended by the Byzantines into a unique and viable synthesis that made Constantinople, until 1204, the cultural capital of all Christendom. It was, at least in part, this many-faceted cultural amalgam that enabled Byzantium to play a far from insignificant part in the formation of Western civilization.

To analyze the Byzantine cultural influence on the West is a complex problem spanning more than a millennium of history and involving, in one way or another, most of the countries of Europe. One could perhaps make facile generalizations about the natural tendency of the less developed Western civilization to draw upon or be influenced by the more complex, sophisticated Byzantine. But we must

not forget that, as the medieval period progressed, Byzantium and the West were becoming increasingly estranged—indeed, by perhaps the ninth or tenth century they had become almost two different worlds—and that many Westerners, especially those who did not come into direct contact with the East, were not receptive to Byzantine influence. To demonstrate a *definite* cultural impact of the Christian East on the West can, accordingly, sometimes be a rather difficult—even elusive—task, particularly in regard to those fields which are less tangible in nature or in which the remaining evidence is inadequate.

Now that we have pointed out some of the difficulties in tracing cultural dissemination, let us concentrate on selected areas of culture in order to show in each case what the specific Byzantine contribution seems to have been.

THE THEOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE BYZANTINE CHURCH FATHERS

As is well known, the early theology of Christianity developed almost entirely in the Christian East. The relative ease of communication in the period before A.D. 330—the foundation of Constantinople—and especially the lack of any real language barrier (educated people in East and West generally knew both Greek and Latin) allowed the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists to be transmitted without difficulty to most areas of the Roman Empire.² A strong sense of the community of Christendom prevailed.³ Gradually, however, for a number of reasons—political and ecclesiastical rivalry as well as social, economic, and cultural considerations—communications between the Greek East and Latin West became more difficult, and East and West, theologically speaking, tended to grow apart.

Basic to the differing developments in theology was, of course, the diversity of problems and situations faced by the theologians of the two regions—hence, the emphases, or shades of emphasis, in their respective theological thought. The East, though like the West insistent on *correct* belief ("Orthodoxy") and precise formulation of doctrine, tended toward a more mystical approach, that is, a type of spirituality that emphasized union with God. The West, on the other hand, though certainly sharing some of these mystical proclivities, seemed primarily to be interested in what has been called a more

"legalistic" approach to theology.⁴ But despite these incipient differences, certain Eastern Fathers continued for centuries to serve as the fountainhead for Western theological speculation.⁵

Of the four major Western Doctors of the Church, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory (the first three belonged to the generation succeeding the principal Greek Fathers), two were students of the Greeks. Ambrose studied with the Byzantine Gregory of Nazianzus, often quoting from his works. Jerome, after learning some Greek, went to Constantinople and other Eastern areas in order to perfect his knowledge of the language, as well as of biblical exegesis. There he consulted with Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Amphilochius of Iconium, and read Origen.⁶ Gregory the Great, who lived later (in the late sixth and early seventh centuries) never mastered Greek, though while serving as papal ambassador to Constantinople he heard Greek liturgical chanting in St. Sophia and, on that basis, may well have instituted his liturgical reform, since called the Gregorian chant.⁷

Of the works of the four leading Byzantine Fathers of the fourth and early fifth centuries—Basil, the two Gregories, and John Chrysostom—those of Chrysostom, especially his homilies and the *Catechism for Baptism*—in part because of their very practical application—were especially known in the West. John is quoted extensively not only by Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome (one of whose favorites he was) but by virtually all Latin theologians of any consequence. Gregory of Nazianzus, the only Greek Father to be granted by the East the title of "the Theologian"⁸—an honor perhaps accorded less for his originality and profundity of theological approach than for his clear, authoritative exposition of Trinitarian doctrine—combined Greek philosophic ideas with the rhetorical style of the contemporary "Second Sophistic" movement, making effective use of its literary devices of symmetry, imagery, antithesis, comparison, and repetition of key words. He thus put into eloquently persuasive form the dogmas and beliefs that preoccupied Christendom in the period of the first two ecumenical councils. Gregory's works were popular among all classes in the East and, evidently, at least among the educated classes of the West. In any event, it may be said that his works, including his clarification of theological definitions, had a considerable impact on Western as well as Eastern theological thought.

As for Gregory of Nyssa, the greatest mystical theologian of the

early Eastern church, the degree of his influence on the West (and to some extent on the East as well) is only now being clarified by research and newly published editions of his works.⁹ His celebrated theological tracts, *Oration on the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit* and the *Life of Moses*, a prime example of the typical Eastern apophatic (that is, negative) approach to theology, were in the period of the Fathers evidently also known in the West. In the East, of course, his ideas were incorporated into the growing Byzantine mystical tradition, which in about 500 produced its greatest master in Pseudo-Dionysius. The influence of Dionysian spirituality on Western theology and mysticism (the remaining corpus of his works comprise the *Mystical Theology*, the *Divine Names*, the *Celestial Hierarchy*, and the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, as well as epistles) is almost incalculable. For, because Dionysius was for long believed to be the follower of St. Paul, his work enjoyed the status of tracts written in the Apostolic period. In the East, though he was only one among other significant mystical writers—Isaac of Syria and Evagrius, for example—he became, nevertheless, subsequently a very basic fount for mystical thought. His emphasis (in his surviving works) on the negative theology (in contrast to the cataphatic, which was more typical of the West—witness Tertullian and Augustine, culminating in the thirteenth-century Thomas Aquinas) stressed the unknowability of God, the path toward union with God through the “darkness of unknowing,” and the “radiance of the divine darkness.”¹⁰ For Dionysius, eternity already begins in this life through a constant striving after union with God (*theosis* in Greek), achieved by contemplation, prayer, and ascetic practices. It is possible that, after Sts. Paul and Augustine, the most profound influence on Western theological—certainly mystical—thought, was that of Pseudo-Dionysius.

Dionysius apparently had had personal experience with mystical union, an experience he termed “ineffable.”¹¹ Hence, it is not surprising that his theological exposition was often difficult to understand, especially for those who themselves had not achieved such union. It was the contribution of the seventh-century Byzantine Father, Maximos the Confessor, to “systematize” the mystical thought of Dionysius, that is, to put into more cohesive theological form his somewhat loosely expressed and constructed mystagogy and, in particular, to apply Dionysian theology to christological themes. (On Maximos’ and Dionysius’ influence on the West as well

as the East, see chap. 6). Maximos made other contributions to Christian theology, especially as a result of his appearance at an important local council in Rome in 649 and his fervent opposition to the heresies of Monophysitism and especially Monothelitism.

One way to assess the degree of the Eastern Fathers' theological impact on the West would be to establish the number of manuscript copies of Eastern theological works brought to and read in the West. But in view of our inability to answer precisely the important implications of this question—which manuscripts were actually read and by whom?—about all we can say with certainty is that a considerable number are still extant from this period. At any rate, the number of such manuscripts possessed by Latins seems markedly to have diminished in the fifth century with the precipitous Western cultural decline, largely as a result of the chaos attendant upon the Germanic invasions and disorganization of the empire. Several centuries later, however, the circulation of Greek theological works in some Western areas again gained a certain momentum, especially in the seventh and eighth centuries, when Greek monks fled to the West both because of the Byzantine Iconoclastic controversy and the Arabic invasions of the East.¹² The climax was reached in the twelfth century with the widespread influence exerted on the West by the theological treatise of the eighth-century Byzantine, Father John of Damascus, the *Fountain of Knowledge*, which influenced almost all Western theologians, later including Thomas and Bonaventura.¹³

Since the Greek language, from the end of the fourth through the seventh and eighth centuries, had become increasingly unknown in the West (except in a few Greek monasteries in Rome, Naples, and southern Italy),¹⁴ the influence of the Greek Fathers had, of course, been exercised primarily through the medium of Latin translations. Indeed, Western ignorance of Greek gradually became the chief obstacle to Western knowledge of the Eastern theologians.¹⁵

It is commonly believed that Augustine knew only a little Greek; yet entire phrases of Greek frequently appear throughout his works. A more recent view holds that his knowledge improved during the course of his life.¹⁶ Had he actually known Greek impeccably, one wonders what difference this might have made in the development of Western theology, and hence, perhaps, in the relations between the two churches. For Augustine (d. 430), whose theological exegesis became normative in the West virtually up to the thirteenth century,

should in some ways be considered the watershed for the differing theological approaches and methods of East and West.¹⁷ His writings on God, especially his view of the Holy Trinity, were cataphatic, concerned with grace, essence, and to a lesser degree predestination. Thus they differed from the more mystical-minded Eastern theology, which tended rather to be preoccupied with the concept of *theosis*.¹⁸ It was Augustine's vision of the Trinity that exercised such a profound influence on subsequent Western speculation and, as a result, helped in part to bring about the later theological rift with the East, where theologians continued to hold fast to the Trinitarian views formulated by the Cappadocian church fathers.

Though Ambrose and Jerome knew Greek very well, their theological writings, in the long run, had considerably less influence on the development of medieval Western theology than those of Augustine, who is the chief pillar on which the edifice of Western theological development up to St. Thomas rests. Interestingly enough, those few Western thinkers who did not follow Augustine's path (Erigena, for example, in the ninth century, on whom see chap. 6) were those most attracted by Byzantine theological thought, especially its mysticism. The last of the four great Western Doctors of the Church, Gregory the Great, was unable, we are told, to learn Greek (perhaps he refused to do so) despite the opportunity afforded by his diplomatic residence in Constantinople.¹⁹

In the succeeding centuries of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, study of the chief Byzantine theologians of the Patristic era²⁰ began to be revived in the West, especially when the two churches found themselves in confrontation at the Council of Lyons (1274) and, above all, in Florence (1438-39).²¹ Then, at a time when the question of religious union became a burning issue, theologians of both churches sought to learn more about their adversaries' views as expressed in the writings of their Church Fathers, on whom their positions were primarily based.²² Western revival of interest in Greek patrology in the Renaissance was begun largely by the fifteenth-century Camaldolese monk, Ambrogio Traversari. He, in contact with Greek refugees, especially Demetrio Scarano (who entered the Florentine monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli), translated from Greek into Latin such Fathers as Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, and several important Eastern mystics, including Dionysius, John Climacus, John Moschus, Ephraem the Syrian, and even a fourteenth-century prounionist Greek theologian,

Manuel Calecas,²³ Traversari's knowledge of the Greek Fathers was, of course, of practical aid to the supporters of the papal position at the Council of Florence.

Finally, I should indicate a point only quite recently becoming fully appreciated by Renaissance and church historians—that the revived interest in Greek patrology on the part of Western Renaissance humanists (especially Lorenzo Valla—recall his famous critical work on the New Testament, the *Annotationes*, the fruits of which Erasmus was to gather), helped them, in part through their interest in Byzantine-inspired philological criticism, to correct long unrecognized errors in Latin renderings of the Greek Fathers, and more important, of the New Testament²⁴ (see chap. 14). Thus they were able, generally, to come closer to the original text of the Bible and probably, by extension, to the spirit of apostolic Christianity.

PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Let us now consider the important realm of philosophic and scientific ideas. According to the famous French scholar Etienne Gilson, Western medieval and Renaissance intellectual thought underwent two fundamental crises in the course of their development, both under the impact of the reintroduction of Greek philosophy: first, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with the reception of Aristotle from Arabic Spain; and second, in the fifteenth century when an interest in Plato was diffused in the West following the coming to Florence of a Byzantine delegation to negotiate religious union with Rome.²⁵ Now it cannot, of course, be said that a knowledge of the Greek language per se was indispensable to advance in culture. After all, classical Latin was also a flexible and highly expressive language. But the point is that reception of ancient Greek philosophic works brought along with it that greatest gift of ancient Greece to the world—the emphasis on natural reason. In the period of the so-called Dark Ages such an attitude contrasted starkly with the unquestioning, superstitious *Weltanschauung* of the West regarding nature and the world. Hence it is clear how traumatic it must have been for the more thoughtful Western man suddenly to come upon works of Aristotle, with his convincing explanation of the cosmos based solely upon reason and entirely without reference to the supernatural elements of Christianity.

But as we have observed elsewhere, the Aristotelian philosophy

and science that entered the West in the twelfth century did not come directly from Byzantium but via the Arabs of Spain. The point is that this Aristotelian thought was colored by Muslim theological interpretation which, aside from being non-Christian (as on the question of the eternity of matter), sometimes had even confused Aristotelianism with aspects of Neoplatonism.²⁶ It was not until after the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 that most of the original Greek texts of Aristotle and other scientific writers, in more or less unadulterated form, were made available to Western scholars. It is a striking commentary on the distrust felt by the West for the Greek "schismatics," as the Byzantines were called, that for a considerable period Westerners actually preferred the second- or even thirdhand Arabic version of Aristotle to the purer version the Byzantines could provide.²⁷

The introduction of the "Muslim" Aristotle from Spain provoked such a sensation in Western intellectual circles that the pope, sensing danger to the church, had to forbid the reading of portions of that author at the University of Paris, then the chief center of theological study in the West. But as usually happens with this type of censorship, the prohibition proved impossible to implement. Latin scholars, dazzled by the wealth of new material by Aristotle, and other Greek authors, simply refused to obey. And ultimately the great Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, was appointed to minimize the danger by attempting to reconcile Aristotle's cosmology with that of Catholic Christianity—with results that are well known.

It is worth noting that fully five hundred years before St. Thomas, a conciliation of Christian faith—this time of Orthodoxy—with Aristotelian reason had already been attempted in the Byzantine East by the theologian John of Damascus.²⁸ His treatise, the famous *Fountain of Wisdom*, is still the fundamental work for the theology of the Orthodox church and, curiously, was first translated into Latin (in the twelfth century) in Hungary, by a Byzantine-educated Venetian, Cerbanus, at the Greek monastery of Pannonhalma. Peter Lombard knew the Latin translation of John, as did others, but it was not until Aquinas that the work was very effectively used, in the composition of his celebrated *Summa Theologiae*.²⁹ It was also Aquinas who suggested the vast undertaking of William of Moerbeke, Latin archbishop of Corinth—a revised, literal translation made directly from the Greek of almost all of Aristotle's works, including the famous political treatise, the *Politics*.³⁰

For the most part, medieval Western translations of Greek writings were limited to logical treatises, the sciences, and, to a much lesser extent, theology. Significantly, they failed to include classic Greek poetry, history, and much of philosophy³¹—that is, the more humanistic writings. And the latter works did not in general come to the West until the Renaissance. We have no time here to discuss specific works of this nature, but we should note that the original texts—say, of the Greek tragedies—had in many cases been established in Constantinople by Byzantine humanists already in the fourteenth century and then brought westward, mainly by Greek refugees or exiled scholars who settled in Venice and other Italian centers. One has only to examine a list of the personnel of the famous Academy of Aldus Manutius in Venice, which at the end of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries printed many first editions of these influential Greek texts, and which counted among its editors many Greeks, including the famous Cretan Marcus Musurus and the Constantinopolitan Janus Lascaris, humanist-diplomat.³²

Of parallel significance to Aristotelianism for the development of Western thought and learning, as we have noted, was the introduction in the fifteenth century of Platonic philosophy. This, however, is to be associated exclusively with Byzantium and was not the result of mediation through the Arabs. To be sure, certain Neoplatonic works had been known to the West earlier. Already in the ninth century, during the so-called Carolingian Renaissance, the Irish scholar John Scotus Erigena had secured from the library of Charles the Bald, king of the Franks (to whose predecessor, Louis the Pious, it had been sent by the Byzantine emperor), a copy of the work of the Byzantine Neoplatonist Maximos the Confessor.³³ While writing his famous *On the Division of Nature*, Erigena also had at his disposal the work of the most highly influential mystic of the entire medieval world, the early Byzantine Dionysius the Areopagite, which Erigena translated into Latin (see chap. 6). Dante, in his *Paradiso*, drew on material from Dionysius' *Celestial Hierarchy*, and even the fourteenth-century German mystic, Meister Eckhart, owed something to the profound mysticism of Dionysius.³⁴

In the Byzantine East, where pure Platonism was usually suspect to the church, the most influential revival of Platonic thought took place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries at Constantinople and especially at Mistra, near ancient Sparta. There the philosopher and social reformer Gemistos Pletho had founded a virtual cult of Neo-

platonistic studies.³⁵ In the West, on the other hand, Plato had been practically unknown since antiquity (despite the good intentions of Boethius in the sixth century and the pervasive Neoplatonic thought reflected in Augustine). And it was not until the coming to Italy of Pletho and other Greeks to attend the famous Council of Florence in 1438–39 that the original Platonic texts once again were brought into direct contact with the mainstream of the Western tradition. To save Constantinople, now completely surrounded by the Turks, the Greek emperor, in a last desperate measure, had assembled a large number of his prelates and officials (many of whom were also scholars) and had gone to Florence in the hope of securing military aid through religious union with the West. The papal price for Western help against the Turks, of course, was the submission of the Greek church to Rome. The proceedings of this council, the greatest medieval confrontation between East and West, lasted one and a half years. During this period Westerners had the opportunity to acquire from the Greeks a knowledge and appreciation of Platonic philosophy, along with other things, such as a new philological insight into the Greek language of the Scriptures: witness the influence on the work of Lorenzo Valla, who was present at the council.³⁶ Cosimo de' Medici, then ruler of Florence, was in fact so impressed by Pletho that he later founded his Platonic Academy, whence, ultimately, interest in Plato became diffused throughout the entire West.³⁷

On the purely religious side, the Florentine Marsilio Ficino achieved a synthesis of Platonic and Christian thought that had an important impact on the religious outlook of many Western humanists.³⁸ According to some modern scholars, the reception of Plato's philosophy did more to widen the intellectual horizon of the West during the Renaissance than almost any other single factor. Certain other authorities, however, take a narrower view. They believe that the most significant contribution of Platonic philosophy consisted, rather, in an emphasis on a mathematical type of thinking derived from certain Pythagorean materials incorporated in Plato. It was this mathematical emphasis, in contrast to the medieval Western Aristotelian stress on logic that, according to this theory, paved the way for the advent of modern Western science, especially acceptance of the Copernican theory.³⁹

If the Italian Ficino was responsible for producing the first complete Latin translation of the Platonic dialogues, it was, as is not always realized, a Byzantine or rather a post-Byzantine—Marcus

Musurus, the Cretan editor of the Venetian Aldine Press—who made the first printed edition of the original Greek text. To this work Musurus prefixed his famous “Hymn to Plato,” a composition which, at least from the philological point of view, some scholars rank as the finest piece of Greek poetry written since antiquity.⁴⁰

Mention must be made, if only briefly, of the most celebrated ancient Greek scientific work that passed to the West—the *Mathe-matike Syntaxis* of Ptolemy (better known under its Arabic title, *Almagest*), a mathematical explanation of the universe that was to dominate the astronomical thinking of the West up to the time of Copernicus. It is known that in the twelfth century the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Comnenus sent a copy of this work as a diplomatic gift to the Norman king of Sicily, Roger II. And it was from this manuscript that the first Latin version was made. But the effect of the impact made by this work was to be delayed for almost two centuries.⁴¹

During the Italian Renaissance the genuine revival of mathematics came about, less through the reception in the West of translations of Euclid, than through that of manuscripts of the mathematics and mechanics of Archimedes brought westward by Bessarion and other Greek exiles. Indeed, though mathematics did not occupy a formal place in the Renaissance *studia humanitatis*, it came, by the sixteenth century, to be studied by most of those worthy of the name of humanist.⁴²

LITERATURE

Apart from a certain influence on Western historical writing as revealed through such works as the papal librarian Anastasius' ninth-century translation of the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes, the Byzantine influence on Western medieval literature was small. Creativity in Byzantine literature was relatively rare, except in the sometimes remarkable poetry found in the Byzantine hymnology and the unique eleventh-century epic poem, “Digenes Akritas.”⁴³ Byzantium never produced a Dante, though probably the most learned scholar of the entire medieval world was the ninth-century patriarch Photius. This deficiency in literary creativeness is usually attributed (perhaps with certain exaggeration) to the slavish Byzantine imitation of ancient literary models. The cultured Byzantine felt that ancient Greek literature had reached such a state of perfection that

in many respects it was impossible to surpass, a fact which led not only to the close Byzantine imitation of ancient rhetorical style but, more important, to the use by most writers of an artificial form of ancient Greek rather than the living vernacular spoken by the Byzantines themselves. It was this anomalous situation, somewhat analogous to that of an American attempting to write in Chaucerian English, that served in large part to stultify creativity in Byzantine literature.

Since Byzantium was the medieval repository for ancient Greek literary treasures, it was from there or from Byzantine southern Italy that they passed to the West. The medieval Greeks preserved the works of Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and other poets and dramatists, when they were unknown to or had been lost to the Western world. And it is this work of preservation that some critics have termed Byzantium's most significant cultural contribution to the modern world.

While the classic dramatists were read in the East, they were never apparently performed on the stage, probably because of ecclesiastical objections to their pagan character and occasionally immoral themes. Yet it may be noted that up to the sixth century, comedies of Menander may well have been performed in Constantinople. As for Homer, he was read by all Eastern schoolboys. The eleventh-century philosopher-historian Michael Psellus, as a boy, could recite all of the *Iliad*. Nevertheless, Homer's work did not become familiar to Western scholars until the fourteenth century, when at Petrarch and Boccaccio's commission, Pilatus, a Greek of southern Italy, translated the *Odyssey* into Latin prose. The version was apparently not very successful, nor was Pilatus very effective in teaching Greek to Petrarch and Boccaccio. (Actually, it may not have been entirely Pilatus' fault, since dictionaries and other such aids were then unavailable, nor did the two Italian humanists really like Pilatus.) Nevertheless, Pilatus provided Boccaccio with material for his *Genealogy of the Gods*, the first exposition since antiquity of the Greek myths in their original pagan setting. It was at Boccaccio's initiative, moreover, that Pilatus, in 1361, was appointed at Florence to the first chair of the Greek language to be established in Western Europe.⁴⁴ A subsequent and more important holder of this post (1396) was the distinguished Byzantine nobleman Manuel Chrysoloras, during whose tenure so many leading Italian statesmen and humanists came to study with him that

the formal study of classical Greek letters may be said to have begun in the Renaissance.⁴⁵

Researchers differ sharply over the problem of the origin of the so-called Franco-Greek romances, epic poems of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries about love and adventure that were popular in both the Greek East and the West. Some scholars believe that their genesis is to be traced to the medieval Byzantine East, others to the courtly love poems of France. Still others consider their prototype to be the novel of Greek antiquity. Certainly, in the late medieval period, Byzantine poets translated into their own language French and Italian narratives of love and combat and also, perhaps to an even greater extent, created their own works in this genre, examples being "Floire and Blanchfleur," "Lybistros and Rhodamne" and "Belthandros and Chrysantza." Moreover, it is well known that a number of twelfth-century French romances of adventure had their setting in southern Italy, Constantinople, or Rome, and that the names of some of the characters in these works are distortions from the Greek.⁴⁶ Thus, whatever the origin of the form of the so-called Franco-Greek romance, it may at least be affirmed that a mutual interaction of Byzantine and Western elements in the development of this type of literature is clearly indicated.

MEDICINE

In the early medieval period the only medical knowledge available to western Europe consisted of scattered fragments, in Latin translation, of the ancient Greek writers Hippocrates, Galen, and Dioscorides. The revival of Western medicine began in the late tenth or early eleventh century at the medical school of Salerno in southern Italy, where the traditions of Latin, Greco-Byzantine, Arabic, and Jewish medicine met and were blended. Half-legendary tradition has it that the founders of the Salerno school were: Salernus who taught in Latin, a certain Pontos who taught in Greek, Adela who instructed in Arabic, and Helinus who taught in Hebrew. Of the several elements represented here, it is generally believed that the Byzantine, aside from the ancient Greek proper, was rather negligible. But further research on the neglected field of Byzantine medicine may reveal that this view will have to be qualified. It is already known, for example, that a late twelfth-century

Latin physician at the same medical school, Roger of Salerno, was influenced by the treatises of the Byzantine doctors Aetius and Alexander of Tralles of the sixth century, and Paul of Aegina of the seventh.⁴⁷

Arabic medicine was based largely on the ancient Greek, though in one or two areas, such as the science of vision and pharmacology, the Arabs were able to make a few original contributions. In Byzantium, naturally, the tradition of the ancients also was prevalent, and though the Byzantines seem to have made few if any important advances (our knowledge of Byzantine medicine is, however, still extremely scanty), they did achieve in certain respects a rather high state of practical application. Thus, we know that in the twelfth century the capital city, Constantinople, had two well-organized hospitals staffed by medical specialists (including women doctors), with special wards for various types of diseases and systematic methods of treatment.⁴⁸ This situation, of course, was not typical of the entire empire, nor of all classes. Yet it may be contrasted sharply with conditions in the West where, in the early period in general, apart from Salerno, gross superstition was rife.

Arabic, and to a lesser extent Byzantine, medical practice was accordingly far advanced over the contemporary Western. Eastern physicians had learned to recognize the decay of tissues and, in the case of dentistry, to treat and fill decayed teeth and do extractions.⁴⁹ With the transmission to western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries of much ancient medical learning from the Arabs of Spain, Sicily, and North Africa, and to some extent also from the medieval Greeks, the body of Western medical knowledge began to increase. It was the ancient medical and anatomical texts of Hippocrates and Galen, gradually in more complete form, both in Arabic and Greek versions, which in the fourteenth century were used in the rising medical schools of the West—at Bologna, Padua, Paris, and Montpellier. Thus the most influential anatomical textbook in the fourteenth century in the West—indeed, it was to remain the most popular until Vesalius in the sixteenth century—was the *Anatomia* of Mondino di Luzzi, a work based largely on Galen, the Byzantine Theophilus, and Arabic authorities.

Much used in the examination of the pulse and the urine, the commonest methods of diagnosis in the medieval period, was the treatise of the above-mentioned Theophilus of seventh-century Byzantium. But the principal medical work of the Byzantine era

was that of the seventh-century Paul of Aegina. Emphasizing the practical aspects of medicine, its surgical section was celebrated for its excellence and had considerable influence on the medical science of the West, as well as that of the Arabs. Another Byzantine treatise, that of the thirteenth-century Nicholas Myrepsos, remained the principal pharmaceutical code of the Parisian medical faculty until 1651, while the Byzantine tract of Demetrios Pepagomenos (thirteenth-century) on gout was translated and published in Latin by the great post-Byzantine humanist, Marcus Musurus, in Venice in 1517.⁵⁰

INDUSTRY

Before the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the Byzantines were noted for their industrial techniques—techniques carried over in some cases from the ancient Greco-Roman world, but in others involving processes perfected in Byzantium. Silk manufacture, especially the making of magnificent gold-embroidered brocades and the designing of patterns on rich materials, though partly inspired by the ancient Near East, became a specialty of the medieval Greeks. Remarkable for their longevity are some of the Byzantine textiles still remaining, such as those found in the tomb of Charlemagne dating from the ninth century. The products of Byzantine silk manufacture were so prized by the West that when, early in the twelfth century, the Norman king Roger II attacked Byzantine Greece, he took special care to transport to Palermo the most skilled Theban and Peloponnesian silk-workers. The historian of science George Sarton believes that this marked the beginning of silk production in the West.⁵¹ But it is perhaps more likely that the production of the finer Western silk may be dated from this time.

The Byzantines had a great reputation for the casting, in Constantinople, of bronze doors—examples of which are still to be found in the cathedral of Pisa, the church of St. Paul-outside-the-Walls in Rome, at the great monastery of Montecassino, the cathedral of Amalfi,⁵² and elsewhere. Byzantium until 1204 was also Europe's chief center for glass-making. After that date the industry began to revive in the West, especially in Venice. There can be little doubt that the many centuries of Venetian trade with the East, and particularly her conquest of the Greek capital in 1204, had a good deal to do with her newly found technological supremacy, for which

she soon became famous. Interestingly enough, one of the best accounts we have of medieval glass-making, a treatise of the German priest Theophilus dating from the early twelfth century, prominently mentions the Byzantine methods of manufacturing certain types of glassware, such as plate glass and drinking vessels decorated with gold leaf.⁵³

ADMINISTRATION, POLITICAL THEORY, LAW, AND DIPLOMACY

In contrast to the medieval West, where a relatively loose, atomized feudal system obtained, Byzantium, for most of the period, had a highly centralized state organization with a well-developed civil service—a type of government in which virtually all activities were at the command of the emperor. These two elements, the autocracy and the civil service dependent upon it, were basic factors in providing Byzantium with the strength to withstand almost continual foreign invasions and domestic crises.

The autocratic political tradition of Byzantium served as an inspiration for the development of a number of medieval Western governments. Thus, for example, part of the basis for the Norman ideas of kingship in Sicily, as well as some of the Norman court ceremonial (including the king's own costume), seem to have been borrowed directly from Byzantine usage and from the absolutist concept of the Basileus as vicegerent of God, the ruler of both state and church in the world. (The portrait of Roger II in the Martorana of Palermo is a good example.)⁵⁴ This Byzantine concept was opposed to both the earlier Western theory of pope and emperor as wielders of the two swords, and the later papal claims to universal spiritual and temporal sovereignty. We know that Roger II of Sicily, when seeking to bolster his claim to control of the Sicilian church vis-à-vis the papacy, instructed a Greek monk of his kingdom, Nilos Doxopatres, to draw up a treatise expounding the old Byzantine theory of the pentarchy, that is, of the equality of all five patriarchs, including the pope, in the governance of the Christian church. It is probable that the autocratic Byzantine type of government also inspired some of the German Hohenstaufen ideas of royal power and, according to Diehl, helped to shape the subsequent European concept of the divine right of kings.⁵⁵

If the autocracy played a basic role in maintaining the strength of the Byzantine state, it was law which bound together Byzantine

society. And it is the Roman law, codified by the Byzantine emperor Justinian and transmitted via Italy to the West,⁵⁶ which is perhaps Byzantium's chief practical legacy to the modern world. For while the West was steeped in Germanic, barbaric law with its primitive ordeals and trials by battle (see chap. 7), the Greek East was enjoying the benefits of Roman law, which had been leavened by the ideals of Stoicism and other philosophies on the basis of the long experience of the East. It is these concepts of Romano-Byzantine jurisprudence even more than the practical legal enactments themselves that have had the greatest effect on modern Western law.

Contrary to common belief, the evolution of Byzantine law did not cease with the reign of Justinian. Because of the great social changes which came about in the empire, the code had to be modified and even expanded by the Macedonian dynasty in the tenth century, at which time all laws were systematically reshaped in Greek. It was the Macedonian code, even more than that of Justinian, which occupied the central position in Byzantine jurisprudence of the tenth century and afterwards.⁵⁷ It should be noted that it was in large part because of this further development of Byzantine law that the Justinianic and Theodosian codes, which were studied later in the West by the twelfth-century Bolognese jurists, were in that century, for the Byzantines, no longer the guide to their civil law.⁵⁸

Previously, in the eighth and ninth centuries, three other codes had been drawn up by the Isaurian dynasty: the Rural Code or farmers' law, the military code for soldiers, and an "admiralty law" based on the old Rhodian Sea Law. Of the three the latter had a considerable impact on the West. Originally developed in antiquity by the mariners and merchants of the Greek island of Rhodes, the Rhodian Sea Law had been adopted by the Hellenistic cities and then by Rome as a model of maritime law. In the Byzantine East, where it became the official or semiofficial sailor's code and "admiralty law," it offered practical, time-tested regulations for the handling of collision cases between ships and for such "proto-capitalist" problems as the relation of the owner of a ship to the cargo-owner in the event the cargo was lost.

As time went on, provisions of the code seem to have been transmitted, by custom, to the early Italian maritime cities which, as we have seen, had close relations with Constantinople. Possibly the first Italian sea code, that of Amalfi (enacted ca. A.D. 1000), seems to have been based upon it. However, as Byzantine trade declined from the

twelfth century onward and Italy secured the primacy in sea power, the Rhodian Sea Law per se fell more and more into disuse. But some of its more important concepts continued to survive and inspired the development of some of the commercial and maritime practices of Genoa, Pisa, Venice, and even of the famous "Consolato del Mare," the early Spanish legal code (written down ca. A.D. 1300) of more distant Barcelona.

Regarding navigation, it appears that as the great Western commercial cities of the Mediterranean began to develop their trade, they borrowed a number of nautical and maritime terms from the Greek East. For example, the Byzantine term *skala* (landing-place or wharves for merchandise) was used in the Italian documents of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa from the eleventh century onward. The word *gripos* (a Byzantine type of net or fishing boat) and the Greek *karavi* (a large Byzantine type of vessel) also came into common usage in Italy, as did the Byzantine *palamarion* (a rope or cable), the latter found in Genoese, Venetian, as well as Catalan documents of the thirteenth century and later. Perhaps an even more interesting derivation is that of the old Viking term *dreki*, referring to the larger type of Viking ship, the prow of which was decorated with the head of a dragon or other animal, and which may well have been borrowed from the Byzantine term *drakon* (dragon). It should be observed, however, that a recent survey of nautical and maritime terms used in the Mediterranean would seem to indicate that, especially from the thirteenth century onward, more terms of this type were borrowed by the Byzantines from Western usage than vice versa. Examples are the Venetian *cassela*, chest; *marangon*, ship's carpenter; *galion*, warship (which is first mentioned in a twelfth-century Pisan document); and the Venetian term *arma*, meaning rigging of a ship.⁵⁹

The talent for navigation demonstrated by the Byzantines up to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, though unexpressed for a long time afterward, reemerged during the Renaissance period, but now in Venice. In the early fifteenth century, when the Venetian government held a competition for a design for a speedier ship, the contest was won by a Greek émigré shipwright. Strikingly enough, his design was based on a Byzantine model of an ancient Greek vessel. As a modern specialist puts it, "The finest galley builders in the early fifteenth century were still heirs to Byzantium."⁶⁰

An obvious but important area of cultural transmission, hitherto hardly investigated, is the possible influence of Byzantine statecraft,

more precisely diplomatic practice, on the medieval West. Though Byzantine diplomatic methods were originally derived, at least in part, from Rome and the Hellenistic East, Byzantium developed these to a degree of finesse otherwise unknown in the medieval period.⁶¹ Many Byzantine treatises dealing in whole or in part with diplomatic policy and statecraft were written (Emperor Constantine VII's *On the Administration of the Empire* and Cecaumenos' *Strategicon*, for example), which provided detailed instructions, based on both theory and experience, about the most expedient ways to handle difficult political situations. Venice, whose relations with Byzantium were always closer than those of other Western powers, seems to have profited most from the Byzantine example. Indeed, a comparison of Venetian and Byzantine diplomatic practice in the late medieval and Renaissance periods—for instance, the transmission by ambassadors of periodic reports to the home government (*relazioni*) or the organization of an intelligence service—would probably reveal no small degree of direct or indirect Byzantine influence. It may be recalled that Venice, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onward, had a large colony in the very heart of Constantinople and that early on a substantial number of Greeks had settled in Venice.

In view of what has been discussed in this section it may be said in summary that Byzantium, with its carefully organized administrative system, offered to the feudal Western world, especially in the great capital city of Constantinople, something lost to the West since antiquity—the example of a remarkably developed and organized society under the rule of public authority. The influence of this inspiration cannot easily be measured, but it seems hard to doubt that it served as a living exemplar for the West in its transitional stage from a strictly feudal to a more centralized form of government.

GUILDS

Up to perhaps the twelfth century, Constantinople was Europe's chief center of commercial activity; and, as such, its gold coin the *nomisma*, termed *bezant* by the West, was long accepted as the standard of exchange throughout Europe. Given these economic connections between East and West—interrupted, to be sure, but never wholly destroyed by the Arabic invasions—it is of no little interest that the Western guild system closely resembles, in certain respects, the system which for long obtained in Byzantium.

As we know from the tenth-century Byzantine *Book of the Prefect*, all Greek traders and merchants of the capital (and probably of the other cities as well) were organized into corporations or guilds that were under the direct control of the eparch, or prefect, of Constantinople. Cattle traders, butchers, fishmongers, bakers, spice and silk merchants of both raw and finished silk, shipwrights, even notaries, money-changers, and goldsmiths—all had to belong to the guild organization. As in the later Western system, rules were carefully prescribed: no man could belong to two guilds, the wages and hours of labor were carefully regulated, and attempts to forestall or corner the market were forbidden along with disclosure of the secrets of manufacture.⁶²

An important distinction is the fact that, unlike in the West where the authority of the state had virtually disappeared, the Byzantine system was not primarily intended to serve the interests of the producers and merchants, but mainly to further governmental control of economic life in the interest of the state. What the actual degree of Byzantine influence may have been on the Western guilds has not yet been determined. And of course one cannot overlook the fact that guilds, although with a different purpose, had already existed in the late Roman world, the Byzantine being an extension of the Roman. More important, perhaps, is the fact that similar circumstances might well have evoked similar kinds of responses even in areas distant from one another. Yet until a careful and detailed comparison of the medieval guilds of East and West can prove the contrary, it is hard to believe that the long familiarity of the Italian maritime republics with Byzantine economic life—many Italian cities possessed commercial colonies in Constantinople itself—had nothing to do with the development of Western guild organization and practice.

GRACIOUS LIVING

One result of East-West contact that may not immediately come to mind is the impact of the more refined Byzantine way of life on the lower Western standard of living. In the earlier period Byzantine cloths, especially silks and silk brocades, as well as Byzantine utensils and other objects, were eagerly sought in the West, and their adoption helped to lead to what we might call a more gracious mode of living. The simpler wooden and occasional stone fortresses and residences of the Western nobles were gradually replaced during the

crusading period by a type of castle with round towers, a construction which permitted better defense and deployment of forces and which may well have been inspired by Byzantine usage. The Normans in particular seemed to have learned much of what they knew about masonry construction from the Byzantines.⁶³ Eleanor of Aquitaine, queen of France in the twelfth century, who is often credited with introducing more refinement into the lives of the Western nobility, especially those of the women, acquired some of her tastes in the Arabic and Byzantine East while accompanying the French armies of the Second Crusade.⁶⁴ Previous to this, in the tenth century when, as we have noted, the Byzantine princess Theophano married the German emperor Otto II and brought to what she called "barbarian Germany" a large Greek entourage, she scandalized the German inhabitants by taking baths (then considered unhealthy by Westerners) and by wearing rich silken garments. One outspoken German nun said she had a dream in which Theophano appeared in hell for these transgressions! And only a few years later, after her marriage to the Venetian doge, Theophano's cousin, Maria Argyra, shocked the good Peter Damiani, an ascetic Italian monk, by introducing the use of forks to the city of Venice.⁶⁵

The many products of exquisite Byzantine craftsmanship brought westward over the centuries—icons, ivory and jewel carvings, illuminated manuscripts, gold and silver chalices, bronze doors, intricate glassware, and other luxury goods—would seem to point to a considerable amount of Byzantine influence. But it is not always easy to determine how much of, and to what degree, western Europe was actually affected. Another way to show influence of this kind on a more or less permanent basis would be by citing examples of Western words—language is, after all, the most important bearer of ideas—the origin of which has been shown by philologists to be Byzantine. The wide range of terms adduced below will serve to suggest some of the variety of fields in which the East in one way or another influenced the West.

For example, we have from Venice the term *gondola* (a Venetian boat) which comes from the Byzantine word *kontoura*, a small boat, and which derived originally from the Greek *kontouros*, meaning short-tailed. From the area of Ravenna comes the Italian *anguria*, cucumber, which derives from the Byzantine *angurion*. In the field of administration, the English word *cadaster* (register of real estate) is from the Byzantine *katastihon*. In music, the French and English

timbre derives from the Byzantine *tympanon* (tambourine), itself from the ancient Greek *tympanon*, a kettle-drum. The Spanish *botica* (pharmacy) comes from the Byzantine *apothēke*, meaning storehouse. And in connection with fabrics, the old French word *samit* (English *samite*, referring to a heavy silk fabric) comes from the Byzantine *examitos*, "six-threaded." With respect to furniture, the French and English word *tapis* (carpet), Catalanian *tapit*, is from the Byzantine *tapeti*. In medicine, the Spanish *quemar*, meaning to burn, comes from the Byzantine or late Greek *kaema*, meaning a cauterization (a derivative of the ancient, *kaio*, to burn).⁶⁶

Other Western words, the provenience of which is Byzantine Greek, are: *romeo*, the widespread Western designation for pilgrim, which is from the Greek *romeos* (Roman), referring, it seems, to the famous icon of the Virgin which, during the Iconoclastic conflict, had floated all the way from Constantinople to Rome! The Greek term *Paulicians* (the heretical dualistic sect), because of mistaken Western pronunciation, was transformed in the West into *Publicani*. The Byzantine term *Tourkopouloi*, referring to men of Turkish descent who served as mercenaries in the Byzantine army, was in the West applied to bowmen in light armor, commonly in the service of the Knights Templar or the Knights of St. John (whose commander himself was called in French the *Turcopolier*). The late Byzantine term *stratiotes* (soldier) became converted, in Venetian and many other Western languages or dialects, into *stradiotto*, which is also connected with the Venetian word for street (*strada*), thus implying a wanderer as well.

In the area of medical technology the Western designation for catheter was, by the sixteenth century, *argalia* (Latin), earlier derived from the Greek *ergaleion*, meaning tool. Another Western term, the Italian *morphea* (skin disease), was borrowed directly from the Byzantine *amorphia*, meaning ugliness. The Byzantine influence in Western art left a lexical trace in the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries in the term *matizare*, to shade. This came from the Byzantine *lamma*, meaning a gradation or shading of color. Fascinatingly enough, the eighth-century archbishop Andrew of Crete used this term to compare the creative processes of the Byzantine painter with the creative acts of God. The word for the premium paid for the exchange of one currency for another (*allangion*) dates originally from tenth-century Byzantium. The West borrowed the term, which later appeared in fourteenth-century Venice as *lazijs* and also in French as *agio*. In architecture, the Byzantine term *embolos*, designating a portico, turns

up in Venetian, Pisan, and Genoese documents but Italianized as *embolo* referring to the warehouse and quarters of merchants. In the field of textiles, the Byzantine word for raw unfinished silk, *akartation*, became in Italian *catarzo*, and in Spanish *cadarzo*, all with the same meaning. Again in textiles, the Greek term *triacontasimum*, an altar cloth with thirty stripes, became in Latin *triantasimum*, referring to a precious material. In fact, the very tablecloth of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table was called by the German Minnesingers, *driantasma*. The name *Malmsy* (in Venetian dialect meaning "from Malvasia") referred to a type of sweet wine originally from the town of Monemvasia in the Peloponnesus. In navigation, as already suggested, the very common Western term for a small, swift type of warship (galley) was derived from the Byzantine *galeas* (itself from the word for shark or dogfish).

Words borrowed from Latin, Arabic, and Slavic sometimes were utilized in Byzantium, and these words in turn reappeared in the West, often in very similar form. Thus, the Latin *trulla* (ladle) appeared later in Byzantine Greek as *troulos* (dome), and still later in Italian as *trullo*, an Apulian farmhouse with a conical roof. The Byzantine term *Magaritai* (from the Arabic *Muhadzirun* meaning emigrants), referring to the first followers of the Prophet to Medina, became later in the West *Margariz* (as in the *Chanson de Roland*) or *Muhadzirun*, converts to the new Islamic faith; the term ultimately, however, came also to mean renegade. And, finally, even the widespread Western term *slave*, with its many variants, was probably of Byzantine provenience. The ethnic word *Slovene* (a Slavic people) was shortened, mistakenly, to *Sklav-*, and ultimately developed, semantically, into *slave*. Both Greeks and Westerners used the term *sclavus* (or its variants) to refer to a slave.⁶⁷

One could continue with more examples of this kind. But it may be stressed here only that in the age-old and intricate Mediterranean game of cultural give-and-take, Byzantine material was not always taken over directly by the receiving Western culture but was sometimes mediated through a third one, for instance the Arabic, just as Byzantium itself on occasion served as a mediator between other cultures.

RELIGIOUS PIETY: MUSIC AND THE LITURGY

In recent years, with the growth of interest in the Greek church, it has become increasingly evident that that element of Byzantine

civilization which was able to weld together the diverse aspects of its culture and provide its greatest distinctiveness was the Orthodox religion. The peculiar ethos of Byzantine piety was expressed most clearly in the Eastern liturgy, a vivid ceremonial in which the worshiper, through personal identification with the drama transpiring in the church, was able, even more than in the Western liturgy, to experience a kind of mystical foretaste of the blessed life of the hereafter. The importance of the liturgy was so central to Byzantine culture in general that we shall devote some space to a discussion of it.

One, if not the chief example, of the artistic creations of Byzantine religious piety is the hymn—those, for example, of John of Damascus, the Patriarch Sergius, or Romanos the Melodist, who most probably wrote the celebrated Akathistos Hymnos.⁶⁸ These Byzantine hymns were a combination of metrical poetic text and music, together designed to underline and emphasize the devotional, otherworldly character of the liturgy. We are as yet not certain exactly how the musical aspect of these hymns sounded (much more work remains to be done in this area), so it would be difficult to compare their poetry to such famous Western hymn texts as the *Dies Irae* or to Jacopone da Todi's *Stabat Mater*.

For a long time musicologists have been intrigued by certain similarities found in Greek and Latin church music, and particularly by the affinity between Byzantine chant and the Western Gregorian chant as well as by the fact that certain passages of the Catholic liturgy contain isolated Greek words or phrases. One obvious explanation for such similarities is, of course, the common Syrian-Hebrew background of both Christian East and West. Significant too are the subsequent influences that flowed westward from Byzantium. We know of Byzantine colonies that had long existed in many areas of western Europe, especially those of the sixth- and seventh-century Greco-Syrian merchants in southern Gaul. More important culturally were the Byzantine monks who brought their ritual with them and who continued, in such places as the Greek monastery of Grottaferrata near Rome, to write original Greek hymns until past the eleventh century. We know that the famous fourth-century Gallic monk, St. Martin of Tours, was in contact with and deeply influenced by the great champion of Nicene orthodoxy, St. Athanasius, and the monastic tradition of the East. In Rome itself, during the first three centuries after Christ, Greek was the language of the Roman Mass and does not seem at once to have been supplanted by Latin.

Still today, in the Latin version of the Good Friday service of the Roman Church (according to E. Wellesz), one may hear sung the alternating chant, first of the Greek words "Hagios athanatos eleison hemas," then of their Latin equivalent, "Sanctus immortalis, miserere nobis." Wellesz also cites the interpolation of the Greek trisagion ("Hagios ho theos") in the Western service, which we know came to the West shortly before A.D. 529 by way of Burgundy, the rulers of which were then in close rapport with the Byzantine court.⁶⁹

Important during the earlier Western medieval period for bilingual Greek and Latin communities in particular, were readings from the Bible in both languages. As the ninth-century Carolingian liturgist bishop, Amalrius of Metz, wrote, in defense of this custom:

Six readings were read by the ancient Romans in Greek and Latin, and this practice is still preserved today in Constantinople for two reasons, if I do not err: first, because Greeks to whom Latin was unknown were present and because Latins were present who did not know Greek. And, second, because of the unanimity of both peoples [propter unanimitatem utriusque populi].

This theme of the "unanimity" of the two peoples, as expressed in the use of both languages in the liturgy, appears rather frequently in early Western manuscripts, for example, also in Remegius of Auxerre of the tenth century, who, in writing about the use of the Greek prayer *Kyrie eleison*, affirms that "it is recited by both Latins in Greek and by Greeks [doubtless those already in the West] in Latin, both because "certain words sound more convincing in Greek than in Latin, and also because certain words sound sweeter in Latin than Greek, and, moreover, so that we may show that we, His people, are one and that each people believes in one God."^{69a}

It should be stressed, finally, that two principal reasons for the respect accorded to Greek in this early period in Western liturgical usage were, not only the fact that the New Testament was originally written in Greek, but also that the Old Testament had been transmitted to the Latins in the Greek translation of the Septuagint (see Epigraph to this book, quotation from the Western liturgist, the Anonymous of Tours).

Another factor of importance for Western use of Greek was that virtually all popes of the late seventh and eighth centuries were Greeks or Syrians. Thus the Western melody "Ave [Maria] gratia

plena" ("Hail Mary full of grace") has been shown to be connected directly with the Greek pope Sergius of the seventh century and was originally sung to the Greek text "chaire keharitomene." Still another, but curious, example is the Latin hymn "Ave sponsa incorrupta" of Chester (England) which includes a terribly garbled Greek line, "Karikaristo menitra toche partine," the original words of which had come from the Byzantine troparion, "chaire keharitomene theotoke parthene."⁷⁰ Of course, not all accretions of Greek phrases in Latin service books can be attributed to remnants of a common ecclesiastical heritage. In certain cases they might, rather, be ascribed to the influence of Charlemagne and his learned circle (who, according to one scholar, might even have received Byzantine influences in church music via the Muslims of southern Spain, with whom Charlemagne's court had frequent contacts). Charlemagne, we are told by his later biographer Notker, after hearing members of a Greek embassy to his court chanting their religious hymns, was so impressed that he ordered the Byzantine hymns to be translated into Latin, taking care to preserve the original Greek melody.⁷¹

Claims for extensive Western borrowings from Byzantine religious music are less a matter of dispute today than formerly. Nonetheless, it is not yet entirely clear what specific influence the Byzantine musical system of *octoechoi* (a grouping of tones in eight kinds of scales and constituting a melody type) may have had on the Western modal system. The most striking evidence for Byzantine influence on the Western modal system is found in Western musical treatises, particularly the *Musica Disciplina* of the ninth-century Gallic theorist Aurelian. This work, along with certain other roughly contemporary musical treatises, constitutes the first description of the theory of Western chant as it was presumably then practiced, and provided the basis for much of the subsequent theoretical work in the teaching of chant. Aurelian repeats Greek names (e.g. *nonannoane*) for the first modes given to Western melodic formulas apparently used in the West as mnemonic devices in the teaching of chant. Aurelian records his own conversation with a Byzantine who explained that among the Byzantines the syllables of such names were utterances of rejoicing. The application of these Greek names (of modes), previous to Aurelian, suggests a direct influence of Byzantine modal theory on the codification of the Western modal system.⁷²

There is a reasonable degree of agreement that, earlier, Pope Gregory the Great, in his reform of the Western ecclesiastical chant,

was deeply influenced by the Eastern hymnody—and this despite the fact that as long-time papal *apocrisiarius* (ambassador) in Constantinople it is reported that he had refused to learn Greek on the grounds that the Byzantine clergy were too worldly! But it seems significant that he set about reorganizing his Schola Cantorum, a training school for instruction in the chant, immediately after his return from Byzantium, where we know that he was a frequent observer of the practice of the Byzantine chant at the cathedral of St. Sophia.⁷³

The only vestiges of Byzantine secular music that remain today have to do with the acclamations, or *polychronia*, which were addressed to a newly enthroned emperor. It is worthy of note that at the coronation of Charlemagne in St. Peter's on Christmas day of the year 800, the populace assembled in the basilica burst forth, at the appropriate moment, into the imperial Byzantine *polychronion* ("May you rule many years")—a practice still preserved today in the Orthodox salutation to a newly appointed bishop (and also in the same Catholic salutation in Latin, "ad multos annos," to a newly enthroned Roman bishop). Though evidently we cannot credit the medieval Greeks with the invention of the organ, its first appearance in the medieval West seems to have been as a gift presented in 757 by the Byzantine emperor to Pepin, ruler of the Franks.⁷⁴

Much later, in the Italian Renaissance, the Greco-Byzantine influence in music was again exercised, now for the last time—but with respect to secular music. In Italy, especially in Milan, Florence, Venice, and Rome, there were attempts on the part of humanists to restore what they thought was ancient Greek musical practice, in order, as they put it, to recapture the "maravigliosi effetti" of music. Notably, the first and greatest of these humanist theoreticians, the fifteenth-century musician Francesco Gafori, hired a translator to render into Latin from the Greek not only Ptolemy's *Harmonics* and Aristides' *De Musica*, but a commentary on Ptolemy by the fourteenth-century Byzantine scholar Manuel Bryennios.

What especially led humanists like Gafori to examine ancient musical practice was the current Renaissance interest in ancient Platonism, in which music of course had held an important place. Another sixteenth-century humanist whose aims were similar was Gioseffe Zarlino, who knew Greek as well as Hebrew and Latin, and was *maestro di cappella* at St. Mark's in Venice. Other musical theorists of the Renaissance were French poets of the circle of the

Pléiade, who in turn manifested great interest in the classical Greek meters.⁷⁵

Much more evidence of Western indebtedness to Eastern religious music—and quite possibly a few instances of the reverse as well—will probably be found by researchers. One hindrance to such a study has been the undue emphasis placed on the schism between the two churches—a fact which has led some too readily to believe that little cultural interaction was possible, at least after 1054, the date commonly taken as marking the definitive rupture between the Greek and Latin churches. But this interpretation is probably much exaggerated, because for centuries the two great bodies of Christians had looked upon one another as part of one undivided Christian church.⁷⁶ Indeed the schism did not become truly definitive, it would seem, until as late as 1204, when the Latins captured Constantinople and forced the Greek population to accept Roman Catholicism. On the lower levels, in fact, the ordinary man of both East and West was hardly even aware of any religious rupture until long after 1054, and probably not until well into the twelfth century.⁷⁷

Another significant subject, the study of which is only now beginning, is the influence of Byzantine piety, especially that of the Greek Basilian monks, on Western monastic life. When, during the ninth, tenth, and early eleventh centuries, many Byzantine monks fled the Arabic invasions of Sicily and southern Italy to move farther north, they brought with them the traditional ideals and practices of Byzantine monasticism, especially the ascetic type. Because of the piety of these monks they were, in this period, almost always well received, and we find examples of Byzantine-Latin symbiosis in certain Western monasteries such as the one at Montecassino, where in the late tenth century the famous Greek monk St. Nilus lived with Latin monks and wrote hymns to St. Benedict. (At this time Montecassino even had a Greek abbot.) In Rome, at Sts. Boniface and Alexius, Basilian and Benedictine monks lived together, each group under its own rule, all under a Greek abbot. The Byzantine traits that most attracted and influenced the West were the high degree of spirituality and the monks' sanctity of life (including their manner of prayer) in a period of general Western corruption and ecclesiastical degradation. The severe Basilian ideal of manual labor—at this time Western monks usually employed serfs to do their work—and the Patristic erudition of some of the

Greek monks also seem to have inspired their Western counterparts. It is interesting that the monastic houses of the West most clearly connected with the Cluniac reform movement—St. Vannes at Verdun, Cluny under Hugh, and others—had the closest relations with the Greek monks. It is therefore very possible that Byzantine influence may have played a certain indirect role in the Western reform movement of the period.⁷⁸

Finally, in connection with the development of popular piety in particular, one might profitably investigate the influence of Byzantine ideas on Western attitudes regarding veneration of the Virgin—that is, Mariology. After all, when Mariology in the West was still in a rather undeveloped phase, the cult of the Virgin, who was looked upon as the protectress of Constantinople, was second to none in the East. In the late eleventh century a new and influential form of popular literature emerged in the West, the so-called stories of *Miracles of the Virgin*. These, more imaginative than previous legends of this type, were concerned with the miraculous intervention of the Virgin in the lives of her devotees and, as in the East, emphasized her compassion for individuals, not so much her interest in churches or religious corporations as such. Some of the stories, of course, were taken over from ancient Latin tradition, but it seems certain that a not inconsiderable number came from the Byzantine East. Thus, the famous reformer Peter Damiani, one of the earliest collectors of such stories, tells us that one of his chief sources of information was the cardinal-priest Stephen, a Burgundian who had served as papal legate to Constantinople in the famous episode that produced the schism of 1054.

No less important than the newly developing emphasis on veneration of the Virgin was the influence of the many sacred relics of the early Christian church, which had begun to flow westward already from the twelfth century and especially after the mass despoiling of the Greek churches by the Latins in 1204. This wealth of relics in certain ways helped to bring about an alteration even in the appearance of Western churches, and thus, together with the increased emphasis on Mariology, made a deep impression on the developing Western forms of public and private devotion in this period.⁷⁹

ART

Unlike the Byzantine service to literature, which in many re-

spects may appear to have been mainly a holding operation from antiquity, the Byzantine contribution to art was essentially original and attained a degree of expressiveness that has rarely been equaled. Byzantine art, painting in particular, has been much in vogue recently, especially because of its relatively abstract character and richness of color. We shall have to limit our remarks here to the more important aspects of Byzantine art, concentrating especially on Italy where its influence was greatest.

It is no exaggeration to say that Italy, from the sixth to the thirteenth centuries, was an artistic province of Byzantium. In its many monuments of painting and mosaics can be seen the distinctive traits of that art—its power, mysticism, color, and line—qualities which sought to represent to the viewer something more than the appearance of nature, rather to evoke emotions expressing the reality of the other world.

We may begin with the Byzantine mosaics at Ravenna, especially the portraits of the emperor Justinian, his consort Theodora, and the imperial court. The refulgent cubes (*tessera*) of colored glass and stone, set at various angles, reflect the light in such a way as to suggest the celestial richness of the court of God's vicar on earth. In these mosaics and also in the wall paintings of the Ravenna churches, in some of those of Rome throughout the various medieval centuries (the work of the artist Cavallini, for instance), and in the Norman cathedral of Monreale in Sicily with the imposing figure of the Byzantine Pantocrator in the apse, the tradition of the East is clearly apparent. Further north, in Venice, which was almost a Byzantine city, as Diehl puts it (or "another Byzantium," as Bessarion declared in the fifteenth century),⁸⁰ the mosaics of St. Mark's cathedral—the building itself is almost an exact replica of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople—also belong to the artistic sphere of Byzantium. Evidently modeled after St. Mark's is the dome structure of the church of Saint-Front in Perigueux, France; while still farther to the north, in Charlemagne's capital of Aachen, Germany, Charlemagne's palace chapel was modeled after San Vitale in Ravenna, itself an imitation of the Church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople. Also to be found at Aachen are bronze doors and other specimens of Byzantine or Byzantine-inspired workmanship.⁸¹

While he regarded the great monuments of Byzantine art with admiration, the medieval Westerner prized even more the smaller but precious works of Byzantine craftsmen. Some ivory carvings sent

as gifts to Western princes or prelates still remain, and the French monastery of St. Denis possessed textiles ornamented with Eastern-type figures. Along with their creations, the Byzantine craftsmen themselves not infrequently moved to the West; and they, probably even more than the products of their art, seem to have been responsible for suggesting new ideas and methods to local Western artists. Thus, in the seventh century, when the Greek monk and later archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore of Tarsus, came to Britain, his entourage may have included Easterners expert in the technique of sculpture. Similarly, the painted figures of the Evangelists in the Lindisfarne gospels were modeled basically on Byzantine or Italo-Byzantine originals, and we know of an intrusion of the Byzantine style in Northumbria and Mercia, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries in Wessex.⁸² At Montecassino in southern Italy in the eleventh century, under the aegis of the abbot Desiderius, Byzantine art objects—bronze doors among them—were purchased in Constantinople and sent to adorn the great abbey.⁸³ And later, during the twelfth century, the interior of the great French monastery church of Cluny was decorated by frescoes in so Byzantine a style that they may even have been done by a native Greek.⁸⁴

Another fascinating avenue for Byzantine influence, only recently suggested, is that of the technique of stained glass. From painted glass specimens recently discovered in the Byzantine church of the Pantokrator in Constantinople (ca. 1126), it now seems plausible that it may have been the Byzantine example which initiated or inspired the celebrated Western craft of stained glass, used to such remarkable effect in the great Gothic cathedrals.⁸⁵

We must touch, lastly, on the difficult problem of Byzantine influence on the art of the Italian Renaissance. Scholars believe that even the beginnings of "realism" in Western painting, usually connected with the name of the Italian Giotto (as the Italian Vasari put it, Giotto freed himself from the dry "*maniera greca*," meaning the Byzantine style), should rather be attributed directly—or more probably indirectly—to the inspiration of twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Byzantine art.⁸⁶ Whether this be true, or whether it was the result of a parallel though independent development of Italian and Byzantine art reverting in each case to ancient Hellenistic or early Christian models (for the historical context, see my Prologue), there is no doubt that in the late thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries a good deal of Byzantine painting became more interested in showing

emotion, was more dynamic and individualized—in short, more “realistic” and human. We may cite as evidence of these qualities the Byzantine masterpieces at the monastery of the Chora (Kariye Camii) in Constantinople, in the churches of Milesevo, Sopocani, and Gracanica in Byzantine Serbia (to which areas Byzantine painters and mosaicists evidently fled during the Latin occupation), to a certain extent in the churches of Mistra (near Sparta), and now also in the recently uncovered paintings at the little church of St. Nicholas Orfanos in Thessalonika. Certain similar but less developed characteristics are to be found in Italy in the works especially of the Florentine artist Cimabue, the Sienese Duccio, and certain other Italian painters.

In the view of the scholar Charles Diehl and especially a more recent authority, André Grabar, it was Italian painting, through the Byzantine influence exerted on Duccio and, more indirectly, on Giotto, that derived the greater benefit from the renewed contact of the Byzantines with paintings in the Hellenistic spirit. Despite their superb creations, the Byzantine artists who were apparently inspired by the realistic aesthetic of the Hellenistic and early Christian models ultimately remained in the minority. And during the course of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, when their Italian contemporaries were advancing to the freer art forms that were to become characteristic of the Italian Renaissance, much of Byzantine painting reverted to the more conventional Byzantine modes. Nevertheless, despite this reversion to the older, more traditional style, some paintings were produced during the period which equal or surpass in brilliance and decorativeness the best works of the earlier Byzantine epochs. What is also very striking is that scenes in these thirteenth- and fourteenth-century paintings display almost a new kind of experimental boldness, a heightened sense of corporeality and emotion which, in the elongated, attenuated figures and the extraordinary coloring used, in certain respects anticipated the style of El Greco.⁸⁷ (For an attempt to explain the causes and context of events for this “Palaeologan Renaissance,” see the Prologue.)

It is the opinion of modern Greek art historians as well as certain Western critics that the celebrated El Greco, born Domenicos Theotokopoulos on the Venetian-held island of Crete some four or five decades after the fall of Constantinople, may be termed, from certain viewpoints, one if not the last of the “Byzantine” painters.⁸⁸ El Greco studied for four years in Venice and later adopted as his permanent



"Group of the Apostles," fragment of the fresco "Dormition of the Virgin," in the Church of Sopocani, Yugoslavia, ca. 1265. From A. Grabar, *Byzantine Painting*, Editions Albert Skira.



"The Anastasis" by Theophanes the Greek or his associates. Detail from a fresco in the Kariye Djami, Constantinople. Courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, Washington, D.C. (Note mystical light enveloping Christ; see pp. 80-81 and especially Prologue, n. 39.)

Detail, head of Adam from "The Anastasis" by Theophanes the Greek or his associates, a fresco in the Kariye Djami. Courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, Washington, D.C. (To illustrate the new dramatic realism of the Palaeologan Renaissance, second decade of the fourteenth century; see pp. 80-81.)



residence the Castilian city of Toledo. But despite the undeniable influence of these two centers on the formation of his technique and style, he never seems to have forgotten his Byzantine heritage. Indeed, a remarkable document only recently discovered seems to indicate that he lived in Crete until the age of twenty-five, not merely until eighteen, as was previously believed.⁸⁹ The point is that this greatest of all "Greek" painters may have been more deeply influenced in his early years by the Cretan-Byzantine style of his native island than some Western scholars have been willing to admit. In that period, painters were apprenticed rather early, so that by the age of twenty-five "Maestro" El Greco (as he is called in the document) should already have had some ten years' experience in the Byzantine style.

An examination of El Greco's mature work would seem clearly to indicate considerable affinity with the masterpieces of both the "Metropolitan" or "Constantinopolitan," and the "Macedonian" style of the Palaeologan and post-Byzantine periods: the importance assigned to the human figure, even to elongation for artistic effect; imaginative use of bold colors; extensive use of highlights to intensify dramatic impact (compare a similar technique of Theophanes "the Greek" in Russia, who evidently boldly used highlights to express in paint the inner light corresponding to the Hesychastic belief in the "uncreated" light of Mt. Tabor); and, most significant, El Greco's deep concern with the mystical realities of the spiritual world, so strikingly similar to the view of the painters of the Paleologan period. To be sure, El Greco seems almost entirely to have forsaken the Byzantine style during the years of his Italian sojourn. But later, in Spain, where the elements of a more abstract, traditional Byzantine style would be more appreciated by Spanish mystical Catholicism, he came to incorporate in his mature work more and more of the traits of the so-called "Constantinopolitan" and "Macedonian" schools. Of course, genius that he was, El Greco was bound by the conventions of no single style; hence one can distinguish elements or tendencies in his work that are neither Byzantine nor typical of the Renaissance ideal, as for example his near-Baroque "mannerism" and less pronounced use of line.⁹⁰

Sometimes overlooked by modern art historians is the presence of Greek painters in Italy after the fall of Constantinople in 1453—men who continued to produce works in the more or less traditional Byzantine manner until as late as the seventeenth century. Their

paintings, often referred to as belonging to the "Cretan" school, are admittedly not of primary importance. But they are frequently of quality, especially those produced by the group of painters living in the Greek community of Venice (about which I shall speak in chapter 9).

Italy, then, the prime area of Byzantine artistic influence, owed much to Byzantium: not only the models from which many Italian artists worked, not only the bronze doors, gorgeous fabrics, enamels, and richly illuminated manuscripts that were brought to the West, but, of more underlying importance, the symbolic pattern of church decoration, the iconographical schemes for important religious motifs, in some cases brought by Greek artists themselves. Thus, all through the medieval period, from the sixth century probably even to the beginnings of the Renaissance in the fourteenth, Byzantine art profoundly influenced that of Italy and, through Italy, many areas of western Europe.

CONCLUSION

What may we say in conclusion about the impact of Byzantine culture on the West? How is its influence to be assessed? It must be pointed out to begin with that such important facets of Western culture as parliaments and Gothic architecture, and probably the basic institutions of feudalism, manorialism, and chivalry, were essentially Germano-Latin in origin, there being little or no Byzantine influence upon them whatever. Indeed, in connection with feudalism, chivalry, and also even Scholasticism, certain influences seem, rather, to have flowed from West to East (see chap. 4). But though not a few examples may be cited of medieval Greek acculturation to individual Western practices, especially among the Byzantine upper classes, the Byzantine influence on the West seems to have been far stronger than the reverse. This was partly because, at least up to the twelfth or early thirteenth centuries, Western civilization in almost all aspects was markedly inferior to the Eastern (in classical Greek learning, of course, few Westerners could equal the Greeks until as late as the High Renaissance); and also because, owing to its developing antipathy to the West, the East in general, and the lower classes, monks, and lesser clergy in particular, strongly resisted the adoption of Latin customs.

Though it must be clear from our investigation that there was a

more or less continuing Byzantine influence on Western culture from the fourth all the way to at least the end of the fifteenth century, it is no less manifest that the degree of influence varied greatly from field to field, depending not only on the pattern of contacts but on the attitudes and receptivity of the various Western areas. Italy, for example, was more deeply influenced than more distant, rather conservative France, and immeasurably more than England (the Slavic areas were, of course, the most influenced of all). Nor is it easy to ascertain how deeply the Byzantine influences we have discussed penetrated the various classes of the Western social structure, though it would seem that because of greater opportunities for "contact situations" with the East and a generally more flexible attitude, the upper classes and merchants were most affected. It should also be stressed that our judgments about the degree of influence must of necessity be tempered by the scarcity of the remaining evidence as well as by the state of scholarly research at the moment. It is easier to show, on the basis of extant artistic monuments, what the Eastern influence may have been on art than, say, on the development of the guild system, where we are reduced to hypothesis or deduction. Similarly, we should consider, I think (it is often overlooked), the evidence of such phenomena as vocabulary borrowings—borrowings which in most cases would not have taken place unless there were at least some degree of cultural transference involved. On the other hand, the mere presence in the West of a great many Byzantine luxury items should not mislead us into assigning the same importance to these as cultural agents as we would attach to the adoption of Byzantine ideas, institutions, or techniques—considerations which in the long run were to prove of more permanent value.

Bearing in mind these qualifications and the fact that Western culture was at bottom Germano-Latin, we may then affirm our findings that Byzantium, through its amalgamation of classicism and the more original "Byzantine" elements of its culture—above all, its unique brand of Christianity which permeated every facet of medieval Greek life—was able, directly or indirectly, to influence a surprisingly large number of aspects of Western cultural development. This influence can be found in certain types of art and architecture, in the sphere of industrial techniques, in law and statecraft, in some navigational terms and regulations, in the recovery of classical Greek literature and possibly the composition of the medieval romance, in forms of religious piety and liturgical music as well as in religious

thought, and, finally, in the development of a more refined, sophisticated mode of life. In all these aspects of most of the cultural areas meaningful to medieval man, there seems to have been some tangible, specific evidence of Byzantine influence in one area or another of western European society. Once more, however, it should be emphasized that these influences ranged from the very minor in some spheres to the very substantial in others.

No doubt the Byzantine contributions *per se* were more passive and less creative in certain fields,—for instance literature, philosophy, and science—which had in the main been taken over from the ancient Greeks and which, especially in the case of Aristotle, were first transmitted to the West via the Arabs. Yet even in their vaunted preservation of the ancient literary masterpieces, the Byzantines were able to make a few contributions of their own. For example, they developed certain philological methods of scholarship—methods which, if sometimes faulty, nonetheless had more impact than is usually realized on the development of Renaissance textual and biblical criticism⁹ and thus could not help but influence the meaning and interpretation of the ancient texts transmitted (the ancient tragedies and Fathers (chap. 13–14). Even in the domain of science, despite their almost worshipful devotion to ecclesiastical tradition as well as to the authority of the ancient Greek writers, a few Byzantines seem to have broken free of these restraints and at least to have anticipated certain later Western scientific developments. Moreover, as we have observed, in several other areas there can be no doubt that the Byzantines were able to make truly *original* contributions, specifically, in art and architecture; in forms of religious piety, the liturgy, and ecclesiastical literature; in aspects of philology; and perhaps not least, in providing for the West something often overlooked by historians—a living example of a state with a highly centralized administration and tradition of statecraft under the rule of public law. Nor did Byzantine influence, as we have seen, cease in 1453. Indeed, after that date (recall the phrase “Byzance après Byzance”), Byzantine influences, through the work of learned Greek refugees, strongly affected the development of Italian, especially Florentine and Venetian, humanism. In view of these considerations it is clear that Byzantine civilization was far from being the mere “fossilization of antiquity” that Western historians were wont to term it not too many years ago.

In sum, then, it was the rich content, the diverse elements *both*

ancient and medieval, of Byzantium's unique cultural synthesis, that enabled it to attract the interest of the Westerners and, little by little and despite the frequent reluctance or outright hostility of the Latins, to provide them with inspiration and guidance. And so by 1453 (when Constantinople finally succumbed to the Turks) and up to 1600, not only had Byzantium handed over its precious legacy of ancient Greek culture to the West—now prepared, in part by the East itself, to receive it—but, no less important, the West had assimilated a good deal of the products of Byzantium's *own* creativity. As a consequence of what might be called this "long-term process of acculturation," Byzantium played a much more pervasive role than is generally realized in molding the civilization of the medieval, and hence of the modern, "Western" world.

Western Influences on Byzantium in Theology and Classical Latin Literature

The problem of Western cultural influence on Byzantium has not hitherto been dealt with in a synthesis that covers its many facets. Besides the fact that most medievalists focus on the formation of their own Latin culture, a primary reason for this neglect is the very inferiority, in most respects, of Western civilization to that of the Greek East, at least until the end of the twelfth century. Implicit here, of course, is the premise that an essentially less advanced culture will normally exert little or no influence on a more developed one. This argument, in the present case, seems valid enough, for the three basic elements of Western medieval civilization—the Greco-Roman (with strong accent on the Roman), the Latin Christian, and, lastly, the Germanic—were not fully integrated into a truly viable cultural synthesis until perhaps the first half of the twelfth century. It is therefore not until then, or soon thereafter, that in the higher, more intellectual spheres any real influence of West on East can be detected. In the East, in contrast to the West, the fusion of the mature, Hellenistic civilization with Patristic Christianity had been more or less fully achieved by the fifth or sixth century.

Despite this acute difference in cultural evolution, one may discern even before the twelfth century a few exceptions to the superiority of East over West in the more mundane, less intellectual areas: in military science (specifically relating to the shock tactics of the Western cavalry), in the Byzantine adoption of certain Western chivalric practices and feudal terms, in commercial and nautical terminology and usages, and, perhaps most important, in the area of Roman law and administration.¹

Another factor leading to the neglect of our theme—one more difficult to assess—is the generally conservative attitude of the Byzantine citizen and his culture. Because of this conservatism, historians have too often concluded that Byzantine culture remained

static. But Byzantine culture, however tradition bound, generally succeeded in assimilating the various influences that penetrated the empire—at least the influence exerted before the Crusades by peoples of Persian, Armenian, or Arabic stock, for whose cultures the Byzantines in general had a certain amount of respect.

The case of Latin influence, however, seems to be different. The Byzantine feeling toward the West, consistently expressed throughout Byzantium's long history, was that, though both areas of East and West originally constituted segments of the one undivided Roman Empire and shared basically the same Christian religion, the Byzantines, in general culture and in theological speculation, were vastly superior. This is a significant point, for to a greater or lesser degree it served to condition Byzantine reception of Western influences, and in certain cases might even entirely inhibit receptivity. The Byzantines believed strongly that they were the true inheritors of, indeed the sole repository for, the literary and philosophic treasures of ancient Greek civilization and, from the Hellenistic and Patristic periods onward, of Greek, or what they themselves always termed "Roman," Christianity. This unqualified Byzantine feeling of superiority to the West was succinctly and accurately expressed by Gibbon in the following passage from his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*:

In every age the Greeks [Byzantines] were proud of their superiority in profane and religious knowledge; they had first received the light of Christianity; they had pronounced the decrees of the seven general councils; they alone possessed the language of Scripture and philosophy; nor should barbarians, immersed in the darkness of the West, presume to argue on the high and mysterious questions of theological science.²

Why, then, the Byzantines must have thought, should they bother to appreciate, much less to adopt, any of the cultural traits of the barbaric or semibarbaric West?

This disdain toward the West was, with the passing of the centuries, to become even stronger—exacerbated not only by differences of culture but by political rivalry as well. Witness the question of the "two emperors," each claiming to be the true successor to the Caesars of Rome;³ note also the economic rivalry, which in time became expressed in a virtual strangle-hold of the Venetians and Genoese over the Constantinopolitan trade; and, most important perhaps,

consider the religious schism. Here we need only mention the dispute between Patriarch Photius and Pope Nicholas and, subsequently, the acrimonious mutual excommunications of 1054. All these factors combined to produce a growing alienation of East from West which was brought to a shattering climax in 1204 with the rape and occupation of the Byzantine capital by Western armies of the Fourth Crusade. Indeed, such a massive psychological trauma was created in the Byzantine psyche as a result of the Latin conquest, the enforced Greek conversion to Roman "Catholicism," and what to many Byzantines seemed a drive toward Latinization of the Greek East by overt or covert means, that thereafter no genuine cultural interaction between the Western and Eastern worlds of Christendom would have seemed possible.

Nevertheless, this assumption, logical as it may appear, is at least in part incorrect. For, despite the eventual outbreak of overt hostility, both worlds were as a result brought into much closer contact physically. Paradoxically enough, it was precisely the effect of the Fourth Crusade and the Latin occupation of the Greek East, with the accompanying social and economic interaction of the two peoples, that made intellectual and religious exchanges between East and West more frequent and closer than ever before. Thus it is, in these last two or three centuries of Byzantine history, the thirteenth to the fifteenth, when Latin merchants and mercenaries, pilgrims and missionaries—the latter seeking tirelessly to convert the Greeks to Roman Catholicism—swarmed almost everywhere in the East, that Western influence made the greatest cultural inroads there.

In spite of the many Western influences to which, in greater or lesser degree, the Greeks were exposed, I have elected here to concentrate exclusively on two aspects of the intellectual sphere: theological influences and those based on classical Latin literature. These have been chosen for a twofold reason: first because, contrary to what one might expect, there actually was a substantial impact of Latin theology on certain Eastern thinkers, and second because, in view of the often cited Byzantine opinion of the Latins and their language as "barbarian," one is surprised to find *any* degree of influence of classical Latin literature on the East. At the end of this chapter, I shall try to draw a few conclusions as to why, given this surprising degree of Latin influence in theology and, to a lesser extent, in classical literature, Byzantine civilization remained so little affected in the long run.

THEOLOGY

Accustomed to hearing that the clearest manifestation of mutual hostility between Greeks and Latins was in connection with the church, we would naturally assume scant influence of either side on the other. Yet, oddly enough, it was in the last three centuries of the empire, the period of sharpest antagonism, that a not inconsiderable degree of Latin influence in the theological sphere seems to have made itself felt within Orthodoxy. In theology as well as general culture, the Byzantines constantly exulted in what they believed was their superiority over the Latins. And in the eyes of some Westerners, despite the growing Latin aversion for the Greeks, this was, tacitly at least, acknowledged by the fact that in the Middle Ages someone could always be found in some corner or other of the West who hungered to learn something of Hellenic antiquity and the early Eastern Fathers. Were not the latter the pristine source of the Western Christian faith as well? As E. Gilson has rightly emphasized, it was only when Westerners were able to come into contact, directly or indirectly, with representatives or works of ancient Greek or Byzantine learning, that genuine advances in medieval philosophy were made in the West:⁴ witness the Aristotelian revival of the thirteenth century and the Platonic one of the fifteenth.

The notion is widespread that the Byzantines valued lightly—even disparaged—the West's literature and theology and therefore incorporated little or nothing of them into their own culture. True, the Greeks, to judge from surviving evidence, seem to have been hardly aware of the greatest Western Father, St. Augustine, or at least knew little of his works in the early period. As has been (correctly) claimed, the watershed between Byzantine and Western theology probably occurred under Augustine, whose works marked a real departure from the direction taken by the Cappadocian Fathers.⁵ Yet some versions of the Latin Fathers were known early in the East. Moreover, one can enumerate even before the eleventh century a few translations of Western works into Greek, and after the twelfth and especially the thirteenth centuries, a surprisingly large number. Already in the early sixth century, for example, Emperor Justin had the historian Flavianus translated, so that he might justly assert East Rome's continuity from the empire of Augustus.⁶ And in the ninth century, as Photius himself tells us, perhaps the most popular Western work of hagiography, Pope Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, was turned into Greek from the original Latin by Pope

Zacharias (himself a Greek). Other works of Gregory, such as his *Pastoral Care*, were also translated at various times.⁷ Even in the tenth century, the darkest Western hour of all, the example may be cited of Leo of Naples, who attempted to make a translation of the apocryphal story of Alexander the Great, originally written by Pseudo-Callisthenes.⁸ But these works, one must grant, were not widely diffused and seem to have produced little effect on the mind of the East.

One can also mention, after the sixth century, sporadic examples of Byzantines in the East who knew Latin. To be sure, Justinian is usually cited as the last Latin-speaking Byzantine ruler. But all through the millennium of Byzantine history, one can, if one looks hard enough, find instances of imperial interpreters and envoys who had a practical knowledge of Latin for purposes of diplomacy. Thus in 1054, in the Greek counterexcommunication directed at the papal envoys of Leo IX, the name of a Spanish interpreter who obviously knew Latin is mentioned.⁹ And in the sphere of law, the emperor Constantine IX of the same period prescribed that the head of the newly reestablished law school of Constantinople know Latin so as to be able to read the Justinianic legal corpus in the original.¹⁰ This, of course, was in accord with Justinian's own injunction against translation of his famous code. Nevertheless, because of changing social conditions, Justinian's code had long since been converted into Greek.

We must move to the twelfth century, however, to the Pisan brothers Hugo Eterianus and Leo Tuscus, both in the employ of the emperor Manuel I Comnenus, to find the first significant examples since the ancient world of Westerners translating Greek Patristic works into Latin.¹¹ These two, one working as interpreter to the emperor, the other, as imperial adviser on questions of religious union, acquired not only a thorough command of Greek but, through perusing the numerous libraries of Constantinople, a wide familiarity with contemporary and Patristic Greek theological works.¹² During this same century may be mentioned, among others, the example of the papal envoy, the German Anselm of Havelberg, who has left us a vivid account of theological disputations held in 1136 before the emperor in Constantinople. And of course one should recall in this period the great influence the theological work of the Byzantine John of Damascus was having on a very large number of Western theologians.¹³

A parallel example in the West of the effect that Greco-Latin

negotiations for religious union had on church ritual during the twelfth (and later the thirteenth) century, may be observed in the increasing number of translations made into Greek from Latin liturgies. These, however, as has earlier been shown, were primarily for the use of the Greek-speaking communities of southern Italy, which had resided there for centuries.^{13a}

The beginnings, however, of a more sustained Greek interest in the West's ecclesiastical literature did not occur until one century later, after the Council of Lyons in 1274. At that conclave, though no official disputations took place, informal contacts between Greek and Latin ecclesiastics (Bonaventura, the great Latin mystic-Scholastic, represented the West) resulted for the first time in centuries in Byzantines casting about for Latin theological works to translate.¹⁴ But the newly found enthusiasm of these Byzantines for Latin works, it should be underscored, was usually motivated less by purely intellectual fervor than by the exigencies of religion and politics. To thwart the designs of Charles of Anjou, then threatening a new Latin invasion of Byzantium, the Greek emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus looked toward effecting a reunion of the two churches in exchange for papal support for Constantinople against Charles.¹⁵ With ecclesiastics of both sides coming into increasing contact with one another after Lyons, a more solid interest in Latin dogma and ecclesiastical literature was finally able to take root among the Greeks. And so, to best the Latins at their highly developed Scholastic argumentation, or for reasons of sheer polemic, the Greeks now found it expedient—nay indispensable—to acquire some knowledge of their opponents' methods and materials.

An example of the unexpected result such interest in Latin ecclesiastical writings might have, is that of the erstwhile, sharply anti-unionist Greek patriarch, John Bekkos. Cast into prison in 1273 by Michael VIII, he pored belligerently over the Latin Patristic texts that had been brought him, only to come to the conclusion, remarkable for his age, that the differences between East and West on the thorny problem of the procession of the Holy Ghost were relatively minor. Since G. Hofmann has recently shown that Bekkos knew no Latin, one must assume he used translations of Latin theological treatises.¹⁶

The Byzantine interest in Western sacred writings seems to have led, in one case at least, to an eagerness also to learn the literature of Latin antiquity. Evidently, the first recorded Byzantine after the Patristic period who evinced real interest in the profane learning

of the ancient Romans seems to have been the late thirteenth-century monk Maximos Planudes. Indeed, his primary interest lay less in theology than in ancient philosophy, mathematics, Arabic (i.e. Indian) numerals, and belles lettres.¹⁷ Planudes, it seems, even appreciated Ovid. But this eager translator, whose interest in Latin classical letters we shall concentrate on in a moment, was not occupied entirely with profane letters. He also put into Greek, Augustine's theological treatise *De Trinitate*, so basic to a Western understanding of Trinitarian doctrine—a translation that was to become popular among the growing group of Latinophile Greeks.¹⁸ Though Planudes' interests in Latin culture were on the whole more humanistic than theological, he wrote, in his later years, two treatises directed against Latin views of the filioque.

For Greeks interested in Latin learning, a kind of nursery for the study of Latin in the East was the Dominican monastery of Pera, established across the Golden Horn from Constantinople some time after the Latin occupation in 1204 (probably before 1228). Something of a theological "college," the monastery in time became a center for the radiation of Latin theological influences throughout the entire Greek East.¹⁹ Although Planudes himself apparently did not study there—it is clear, however, that he had close contacts with many Dominicans of the East—a considerable number of contemporary and later Greek figures took advantage of the vistas on the West opened by the monastery. Such Byzantines as Prochoros and Demetrios Cydones, Manuel Calecas, the little-known John Cyparissiotis, and the fifteenth-century patriarch Gregory Mammias, became exponents of the burgeoning cultural relations between East and West.²⁰

Thus Dominicans, whether teaching in the Pera monastery or privately, turned out Byzantines such as these bilingual Greeks, who began to spread Latin ideas—their Greek opponents would say Latin religious propaganda—throughout the Byzantine Empire. Not all the activities of the monastery conduced to greater understanding, however, for some of the friars, both Latin and Greek, began to engage in polemic, writing treatises specifically against Orthodoxy. Nor were all the translations made from Latin into Greek of the same high quality as those of Planudes. Thomas Aquinas himself, in his *Contra Errores Graecorum*, it seems, used versions of polemical, anti-Greek treatises translated in the Pera monastery—versions we now know contained errors and even sometimes misrepresented Greek doctrinal views.²¹

With the increasing translation, in the later thirteenth and four-

teenth centuries, of Latin theological works (resulting from more frequent political and religious contacts), Latin theological currents began to produce a very disturbing effect on traditional Greek theology. An important manifestation, at least in part, of this development is the conflict in the Byzantine world between the so-called Barlaamites and the Palamites of Mt. Athos over the quietistic doctrine of Hesychasm. The aim of the Hesychast monks was *theosis* (literally, "divinization"), or mystical union with God (see chaps. 1, 3, and 6). One aspect of this controversy was the strife between what has often (perhaps mistakenly) been taken to be the Latin-oriented theology of Barlaam, a Greek born in southern Italy, and the Byzantine theology of the archbishop of Thessalonika, Gregory Palamas. Barlaam, as John Cantacuzene and others tell us, was trained in the method of Aristotelian logic and philosophy.²² Some modern scholars affirm that he was a Nominalist in the Western sense, though this view may partly be due to the fact that he taught (at the Chora of Constantinople) the philosophy of Pseudo-Dionysius, whose apophatic approach was in some ways perhaps similar to the views of Ockham. Gregory Palamas, on the other hand, an Athonite monk before he became archbishop, was a close follower of the Greek Patristic mystical tradition, and as such shared many of the Fathers' Neoplatonic views. Actually, it is very likely that at bottom both Barlaam and Palamas represented different strains of Byzantine theological development.²³

The dispute between Barlaam and Palamas centered on the issue of the possibility of "knowing" God and the way such knowledge could be acquired, a question, of course, already basic for the early Fathers of the church. In his arguments Barlaam, according to certain modern scholars, reflected the Western tendency to preserve inviolate the unity of God and his attributes, thus denying that finite man could ever grasp or "know" the infinite God except through indirect, created means. Palamas, on the other hand, though also maintaining that the essence (*ousia*) of God was unknowable to mankind, believed that union with the uncreated "energies" of God could be achieved. Just as the sun has its center and rays, so too, Palamas affirmed, God has his superessential *ousia* and also his energies, the effects of which may be known or seen by man.²⁴

Another figure closely involved with the Hesychast conflict was the Latin-oriented Greek, John Cyprisiotis. To escape the persecutions of the perfervid Greek Hesychast supporters, he went to the papal



Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica (ca. 1375), from a panel in the Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.

court at Avignon, and in the years 1376-77 entered the service of Pope Gregory XI. There he gained the respect of the Latins who, because of his learning, called him *Sapiens*. In his writings the influence of Western Scholasticism is clearly to be seen. As is rarely realized, Cyparissiotēs wrote probably the first Greek theological treatise using the dialectic method of the Western Schoolmen, *Stoicheodes eckthesis ton theologikon rheseon*;²⁵ and it was the first, or one of the first, of such treatises to be translated into Latin. It should be noted that the later and more famous Demetrios Cydonēs, unlike Cyparissiotēs and despite his many Latin translations, apparently never produced an original theological treatise of his own in the Western Scholastic manner.

Up to the twelfth century, the East, except for a very few individuals,²⁶ knew little of the theological developments that were taking place in the West after the Patristic age. Nonetheless, after the fourth century a few Eastern theologians did possess a desire to learn something of Latin theology. This is evidenced by the fact that Planudes' Greek version of Augustine's *De Trinitate* is frequently referred to in the writings of contemporary or subsequent Greek theologians, especially of the brothers Prochoros and Demetrios Cydonēs of the fourteenth century.²⁷ Indeed, after Planudes' translation, some Byzantine scholars (such as Manuel Calecas) began to quote at length from Augustine in order to support their method of biblical exegesis and doctrinal exposition.²⁸

There can be no doubt that the most significant point in the deepening acquaintance of East and West with each other's theology came in the late fourteenth century in the person of Demetrios Cydonēs.²⁹ One of the truly creative minds of Byzantium, Cydonēs, it has been affirmed by scholars, was initially converted to Catholicism on a purely intellectual basis.³⁰ Through wide-ranging reading in both Latin and Greek Patristic authors, Cydonēs became the first Byzantine in centuries (apart from the isolated case of Planudes, who, as noted, was mainly interested in literature) even to pose the question of whether the Latins had any philosophic or religious thought worth reading. Without exaggeration I think one may say that Cydonēs began to break the iron grip of prejudice against the West that had for so long bound the East.

Cydonēs' Latin teacher, Philip of Pera, was a friar in the Dominican house at Pera. As a textbook for his eager pupil, Friar Philip chose Thomas Aquinas's great *Summa Contra Gentiles* (which, in-

cidentally, was written primarily against the Averroists and, to a lesser extent, the Greeks). Fascinated with Aquinas, Cydones began to turn the entire *Summa* into Greek. By 1354 he had translated four books of it, as well as part of Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* and also the *quaestio disputata* "De Potentia," which deals with the burning question of the filioque.³¹ In his own *Apologia*, Cydones, after describing the impact the angelic doctor's thought had upon his thinking, relates that he presented copies of the translated Thomistic texts to the Byzantine emperor for his perusal. Remarkably, as we are told, his imperial master, John V Palaeologos, praised Cydones' undertaking as "beneficent to the Greek people."³² (It should be noted that this emperor's mother was of the Latin house of Savoy.)

In view of the deeply rooted Greek antipathy to Latin theology, it is most interesting to note Cydones' affirmation that the Latin Fathers—Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory the Great—had also been venerated by the Greeks before schism had separated East from West.³³ Nevertheless, though it is true that some writings of the Latin Fathers were known in the East, we cannot say that up to 1453 these early Fathers had any really formative impact on Orthodox Greek theology. As Dekkers has pointed out, even the few translations into Greek of Augustine, the greatest of the Western Fathers, were up to the eighth century made largely by non-Greeks of the East (Syrians, Copts, and Armenians) and were circulated almost exclusively in North Africa and Syria.³⁴

Like Patriarch John Bekkos before him and the Cretan bishop Maximos Margounios later in the sixteenth century, Cydones found few, if any, essential contradictions between the Latin and Greek Fathers on most of the important points of doctrine.³⁵ Above all, and here he was unique—in a sense a precursor of the modern "ecumenical movement"—Cydones grasped the essence of the spiritual unity of the same faith that in the early church had bound East to West. He was convinced that this unity had nothing of the abstract about it; for him it was a living reality. In his *Apologia* he, in fact, advises other Greeks to study how this unity had been maintained throughout the centuries. It is this higher vision of Christendom that certain modern scholars have taken to be the mainspring of Cydones' scholarly and political life. He was, as affirmed earlier, the chief proponent of an alliance between Eastern and Western Christendom in order to push back the Turks, in contrast to other Byzantine statesmen of the period who proposed a pan-Orthodox—

that is, a Greco-Slavic—union for this same purpose.³⁶ Nevertheless, despite what in our time would be termed the ecumenical cast to his character, Cydones, with no small degree of "nationalistic" Greek pride, was quick to recognize in the method and material of Aquinas's *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Greek elements, and with reference to them he said, in effect (as noted before), that this was "our own Greek material." Realizing that during the medieval period far fewer translations had been made from Latin to Greek than the reverse, he noted that from antiquity Latins had continually sought to make contact with the East in order to profit from things Greek.³⁷

Cydones, interestingly enough, was not only influenced by Thomas Aquinas but also by St. Augustine, whom he mentions frequently in his writings. The Augustinian element is best reflected in his work *De Processione Spiritus Sancti*. There, profusely quoting Augustine, he even accepts the Latin doctrine of the filioque, which he tried to prove to his fellow Greeks on the basis of Augustine's teachings on the procession of the Holy Spirit: "Do not doubt in any way whatever that the Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son and proceeds from the Father and the Son."³⁸ Cydones tried to prove that since the three persons of the Godhead are one, and the Father begets the Son and "breathes forth" the Holy Spirit, and the Father does not differ from the Son (in essence), then the Holy Spirit must proceed from the Son as well as the Father. As is well known, the objection of the Greeks to this was on the grounds that such a definition would imply the existence of two sources, not one, for the Godhead.³⁹ Cydones in one place tries to explicate the Trinity by using Latin exegesis: the Son equals the *logos*, the Holy Spirit equals *agape*, and the Father, *nous*.⁴⁰ He then uses this formula again to prove that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son.

Under the inspiration of Cydones, who was no less than Grand Logothete, a kind of prime minister of Byzantium, there soon emerged in the heart of the Byzantine court a virtual cult of Thomists. One of his chief associates in this circle was Demetrios' brother, Prochoros Cydones, who translated Aquinas's *On the Eternity of the World* (*Peri tes tou kosmou aidiotetos*) and also Augustine's *De Vera Religione* (written originally against the Manichaeans), as well as his *De Decem Plagis et Decem Praeceptis*. Prochoros also wrote several works based on Thomistic writings (*Peri ousias kai energeias*).⁴¹

Manuel Calecas, a member of the same circle, translated into Greek Boethius's *De Trinitate* and, for the first time, a work of the

proto-scholastic Anselm of Canterbury, his soteriological treatise, *Cur Deus Homo*, together with the pseudo-Augustinian *De Purgatorio*.⁴² Calecas converted to the Catholic faith in 1396, and only a few years later, in 1403, entered the Dominican house on the Greek island of Mytilene. His most important original work was his apologia, *De Fide . . .*, concerning the principles of Catholicism according to Holy Scripture, the theology of which again reflects Thomistic tenets.⁴³ After the death of Demetrios Cydones, Calecas became the leading figure in this Greek Thomistic group, but the extent of his influence is not comparable to that of his teacher Demetrios Cydones.

We must omit here the names of others, like the fifteenth-century George Scholarius who was deeply affected by Latin Thomism. (Later, however, as the first patriarch under the Turks, he wrote a very clear exposition of Orthodoxy for the sultan Mohammed II.)⁴⁴ It should be stressed, nonetheless, that the leaders of the Thomistic movement in Byzantium were looked upon with disdain, even contempt, by most Byzantines, who considered them traitors to the Orthodox church and the nation.

But the increasing contact of the two theological systems, with the pronounced Latin theological tendencies that affected the Byzantine church in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, produced the not surprising reaction of making the naturally conservative Byzantine theologians even more conservative. Henceforth, with the exception of the Latinophile works produced, most theological treatises that were to be composed in the Byzantine East were apologetic or polemic in character, directed primarily against what they held to be the errors of the Latin church.

The connections between Latin and Greek theology in the decades before the fall of Constantinople in 1453 now became even closer. But, since they continued in essentially the same direction, we shall allude to them only briefly. Suffice it to remind the reader that the constant arguments between Eastern and Western theologians must be placed in the context of negotiations for the convocation of an ecumenical council to unite the two churches. The Greek emperor and his church sought military aid from the pope against the Turks but would make ecclesiastical concessions only after the convocation of, and discussion at, such a council. The pope, for his part, demanded submission of the Greek church to Rome before granting military aid and refused to attend an ecumenical council unless his

claims to jurisdiction over the entire church were first recognized.⁴⁵

The climax to all the East-West ecclesiastical diplomacy came, of course, at the celebrated Council of Florence in 1438-39, where, though the main purpose was ecclesiastical, the intellectual elite of Italy and the Greek East were, at dinners and elsewhere, enabled to engage in a very profitable intellectual exchange. There, for the first time since antiquity, the complete Platonic corpus in its original Greek form was reintroduced to the West, with long-range results for the history of European culture. A key point in this connection was the writing in Florence by the Byzantine Neoplatonist Gemistos Pletho, of his famous *On the Differences between Plato and Aristotle*,⁴⁶ a work to some degree anticipated by the previous intellectual ferment in Constantinople. Here, as Bessarion would do at greater length later, he suggested in effect why it was easier for Plato to be "Christianized" than Aristotle. The East, of course, had always known Aristotle and Plato in the original. But, as has hitherto not been emphasized, what helped to prepare the Greeks for the Council of Florence and especially for the argumentation occurring in Italy and the East after the appearance of Pletho's treatise was, in a way, the fourteenth-century Byzantine discussions resulting from the reception in the East of the Western Scholastic Aristotle, and especially the work of Cydones and his circle. Cydones' Thomistic circle, then, played a valuable role. In any event, despite Scholarius' own self-serving statement about the inferiority of the Greek dialectics at Florence and even the attitude of the emperor himself, some Byzantine theologians, because of their Thomistic studies, had grown better prepared to meet in disputation with the Latins at Florence.⁴⁷

It is interesting to observe that in the theological ferment that simmered in the East before the Council of Florence and afterwards (up to 1453), two of the chief devotees of Aristotelianism and Platonism adopted different approaches to the most crucial political issue of the day—salvation of the empire. The Aristotelian Cydones, who saw in Thomism a Greek base, hoped for collaboration with the West in a great coalition to repulse the Turk and save Constantinople. The Neoplatonist Pletho, on the other hand, connected Platonism, which as late as the early twelfth century or even beyond was still looked upon in Byzantium as being tinged with paganism or "crypto-Origenism," with Greek "nationalism," and hoped, through application of ancient Platonic concepts, to bring about a regeneration of what he now termed a "Hellenic" state rather than

"Roman" (that is, Byzantine). For him, the patriotic fervor necessary for his program to revivify the Byzantine state and repulse the Turks had to come from the Byzantines' ancient Greek and not from the subsequent Roman (Byzantine) heritage.⁴⁸

CLASSICAL LATIN LITERATURE

Ancient Latin literature, as is well known, derived much of its inspiration, its forms and style, from Greek prototypes. Byzantium, however, as heir and preserver of the Greek (more accurately Hellenistic) literary tradition, tended increasingly to disregard Latin letters after the Patristic age. More than that, in the near-anarchy of the so-called Dark Ages, when Western civilization sank to its nadir, the Greeks of the East began to look even with contempt on Western culture, terming the Latins "barbarians" and believing that the West had little of value to offer the East.⁴⁹ Fortifying this adverse Byzantine judgment toward the ancient, and even more the medieval, Latin literature, was the fact that by this time Latin, originally the language of the court in Constantinople, had in effect become a foreign language to almost all Greeks.

But even classical *Greek* literature and philosophy were not looked upon by all Byzantines, especially monks, with a favorable eye: witness, as late as the eleventh century, the case of the Neoplatonist, Grand Logothete Michael Psellos, who tells us that on a visit to a monastery in Bithynia he was looked at askance by a monk who began to cross himself when he saw Psellos reading the works of Plato.⁵⁰ Even the most erudite of all Byzantine scholars, the ninth-century patriarch Photius, in his collection summarizing numerous classical and Patristic Greek works, the *Bibliotheca*, though making some references to Latin Patristic writings, made no mention of pagan Latin authors.⁵¹

Latin literature, then, was not only considered alien but representative of a departed pagan culture. Moreover, in the context of the increasing political and religious alienation of East and West, it is not unduly surprising that the first example of a learned Byzantine seeking to translate Latin classical works into Greek does not occur until as late as the end of the thirteenth century. Before that, only very few isolated examples of Greek concern for ancient Latin literature can be found—of an "antiquarian" interest, so to say—though, to be sure, much investigation remains to be done on this problem as well as on that relating to Byzantine knowledge of Latin ecclesiastical

literature up to the end of the Patristic period.⁵² It is probably safe to say, however, that there was somewhat more Byzantine interest in Latin literature than is ordinarily believed, if one notes, for example, the existence in both West and East up to the seventh century of manuscripts containing exercises of translations from Latin to Greek and vice versa, and also of Greek papyri containing bilingual dictionaries.⁵³ One isolated instance, already cited in another context, is that of the sixth-century emperor Justin, who desired a Greek translation of the historical work of Flavianus in order to emphasize the continuity of East Rome from Augustus's empire. But his purpose, it should be emphasized, was purely pragmatic, not humanistic. We may also recall in the tenth century the suggestive words of the famous bishop Liutprand of Cremona, who on one of his ambassadorial visits to Constantinople said caustically to the Greek emperor Nicephoros Phocas that, though the latter might despise Latin, his very title was Roman, that he was greeted in the "Latin manner" by his subjects and courtiers, and that even the Byzantine gold coin, the *nomisma*, bore Latin inscriptions.⁵⁴

By the tenth century at the very latest, Latin as a spoken and literary language had virtually been forgotten in the East. Apparently, the last emperor to speak Latin was the sixth-century emperor Justinian, though in the eleventh century Emperor Constantine IX ordered the head of the law school in Constantinople to learn Latin in order to understand Justinian's codes in the original.⁵⁵

It is apparently not until after the interest generated in some circles of the East as a result of the Council of Lyons in 1274 that we find the first example of a learned Byzantine, the monk Maximos Planudes, seeking to translate into Greek, works of the ancient Latin literary tradition. Planudes translated a surprising number of works including, among others, Cato's *Dicta*, Macrobius's *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, Boethius's *De Consolatione philosophiae*, and possibly his *De Dialectica*, also Cato's *Distycha*, Cicero's *Somnium* and *Cato de Senectute maior*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Epistolae Heroidum*. He even turned into Greek some works of the grammarian Donatus and, surprisingly, of the medieval physician and philosopher Petrus Hispanus (who has been identified with Pope John XXI).⁵⁶ Because of his proficiency in Latin, Planudes was in 1296 sent to the West in the capacity of imperial envoy, the Venetians even bestowing upon him, as a mark of favor, the coveted honorary citizenship of their city.⁵⁷

Planudes, then, like Demetrios Cydones of the next century in philosophy and religion, was the first Byzantine to question the justice of the disparaging Byzantine judgment assumed in every age with regard to Latin culture. In his thirst for ancient Latin literature Planudes, who was essentially self-taught but had sporadic assistance from papal envoys occasionally appearing in Constantinople, was evidently influenced by the interest aroused in the Greek East for Latin theology as a result of the Council of Lyons in 1274. This, like the Council of Florence later, in 1438-39, with respect to Platonic philosophy, acted as a catalyst in the meeting of the two cultures. Indeed, Planudes' translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, evidently made soon after the assembling of the Council of Lyons, was able to provide the Greeks, especially proponents of the emperor's unionist policy, with a knowledge of Latin theological views on the much disputed filioque question.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, despite Planudes' keen interest in Latin literature as such, he seems to have been an isolated figure. Apparently he left no followers with his own deep interest in Latin letters, not even his brilliant student, the famous editor of the classical Greek tragedies, Manuel Moschopoulos.⁵⁹

Even the influence of Cydones and his Thomistic circle, in the context of the need for learning Latin to regulate political and religious questions with the West during and after the Council of Florence, seems to have done little to stimulate Greek interest in ancient Latin literature. Certainly what little there was, did not develop with any of the same intensity as did the study of Latin theology.

To what extent did a problem exist for a Byzantine reading the Latin classical texts with regard to the reconciliation of its pagan content with Christian doctrine? Until more intensive research on individual cases is done, this question cannot really be answered adequately. It may be noted, however, that the reading of pagan Greek works in the East, especially the philosopher Plato (even Aristotle), was often looked at obliquely by the monks and perhaps some of the higher ecclesiastics. Actually, the usual medieval criterion in both East and West for the reading of pagan literature seems to have been whether or not it would be contrary to the ideals of the Christian faith. Thus, the reading of Homer and Virgil was permitted, but "immoral" sections of, say, Catullus and the Greek plays seem to have been proscribed. It may be said that in both Byzantium (at least *up to* the Palaeologan Renaissance) and the West, the clas-

sical authors were in general to be used as a means to an end rather than as an end in themselves.⁶⁰

Most significant, however, for the rejection of ancient Latin pagan literature in Byzantium was probably the Byzantine view that it was, in effect, superfluous. The ancient Roman Cicero had already admitted that Greek philosophy far surpassed Latin and was in fact its source. Even the Byzantine scholar of the widest range of erudition, the ninth-century Patriarch Photius, in his famous *Bibliotheca*, apart from references to Augustine's *De gestis Pelagii* and to the Greek Cassian's monastic works (which, by the way, Photius read in a Greek version) makes no mention of classical or of any medieval Latin writings.⁶¹ And as late as the Italian Renaissance, by which time contacts between East and West had become very close, few Greek humanists of the Palaeologan Renaissance as a whole appear to have learned Latin literature until they needed to come to the West for work or study. The Byzantines who learned Latin well seem limited to Bessarion, Theodore Gaza, George of Trebizond, Demetrios Chalcondyles, John Argyropoulos, and the post-Byzantines Janus Lascaris, Marcus Musurus, and Michael Marullus of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁶² Illustrative of the typical Greek view toward Latin literature are the remarks of Chalcondyles (see chap. 13) on the occasion of his assumption of the Greek chair at Padua University.

Interesting, finally, is the attitude of the Byzantine humanist Michael Apostolis. After 1453 he lived as a refugee on Venetian-held Crete, although apparently he made several journeys to Italy. In a speech directed to the intellectuals of Italy, Michael showed that he clearly realized he was living at a turning point in history—a time in which cultural leadership was passing from the dying Byzantine world to the rising humanistic centers of Italy. Nonetheless, to his way of thinking the Italians, though heralding the dawn of a new age, were still merely the heirs of the ancient Greeks, whose superiority in literature and general culture (he affirmed) had never been surpassed.⁶³ The same feeling is expressed in the aforementioned discourse delivered in 1463 at the University of Padua by the Byzantine humanist Demetrios Chalcondyles on the occasion of the inauguration of Greek studies there (see chap. 13). This feeling of cultural superiority, despite the toleration for Latin literature developed for a time by Planudes and then perhaps by Cydones and

his circle, was to remain entirely typical of the mentality of the Byzantines to the very end of their empire. And, as such, it goes far to explain why classical Latin literature was never able to exercise more than a slight influence on Byzantine thought.⁶⁴

To sum up, in the early centuries of the Middle Ages when, as is well known, the superiority of Byzantine over Western civilization was unquestioned, it is not surprising that the cultural influences flowed from East to West and not in the other direction. And yet, even in these earlier centuries of the so-called Dark Ages, when a higher level of mentality, of metaphysical speculation, was almost nonexistent in the low-level, Germano-Latin society so often struggling merely to keep alive, some Western influences on the East may be observed. As the main business of the Western noble class was fighting, it developed efficient techniques of warfare. The skill in battle of the Western knights was, in fact, grudgingly admitted even by the Byzantines. And, as we have noted, certain chivalric customs, the joust for instance, were adopted by some Latinophile Greeks in the twelfth century. Moreover, certain Western terms like *kavallarius* (chevalier) were not uncommonly found as names in the East, and of course in the earlier period almost the entire legal and constitutional system of ancient Rome, along with aspects of its statecraft, was taken over by the Byzantines, though the latter developed diplomacy to a degree of finesse unknown elsewhere in the medieval world.

East and West grew out of the same matrix—the political structure of the Roman Empire and of its Greco-Roman culture—but the two fraternal civilizations had by the tenth century grown so far apart as to form almost two separate worlds of Christendom. Political, religious, and economic factors contributed to this alienation, but not least was the distinct feeling of the Byzantine throughout the entire period that he was, in virtually all aspects of higher culture, superior to the man of the West. He alone had inherited the fruits of ancient Greek culture as well as the Roman governmental tradition, and above all, the true Orthodox faith of the *Christian* Roman Empire. For him the West was no longer Roman. It had fallen to the Germanic invaders. It had become, as the Greeks put it, “Frankish,” and had therefore lost the right to be called Roman. Only the Greeks were now the true “Rhomaioi.” As for the proud Westerner who came in contact with Byzantines, the attitude of the

latter he took as insufferable and unwarranted arrogance, especially after the Latin Crusaders, in his mind, had proved themselves vastly superior militarily to the Byzantines.

Important as these considerations may be, especially from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries onward when Western culture began to rival Byzantine, that which most truly hampered Greek receptivity to Western cultural influences was, as we have several times repeated, not only the Greek feeling of superiority but, in the latter centuries, the overt hostility of the Byzantines to the Latins. This antagonism, though in more inchoate form, had already been evident in the earlier Middle Ages. But in view of the low level of Western civilization in that period, it did not, with the few exceptions briefly alluded to above, serve to any effective degree to block any Latin influences that might flow eastward.

And yet it was precisely in the late twelfth to fourteenth centuries, when Latin oppression became greatest in Eastern political and economic life, that intellectually the deepest inroads began to be made in the East. Some Greeks, like Planudes and in the next century Cydones, the two key figures, were finally able to break the iron grip of centuries-long prejudice and even to accept the idea that Western Christianity had something of value to offer, as, for the humanist Planudes, did ancient Latin literature. But these men still took pride in the fact that the Greek heritage underlay both Latin antique literature and Latin theology. Planudes, with his apparently unique interest in Latin letters, saw in it the inspiration of Greek models. Cydones, for his part, was gratified to see that much of the Latin Thomistic achievement was based on Aristotle. It is true that in philosophy the Latins in the eleventh century made their first advance in centuries only after the reception of Aristotle, though of course by way of the Arabs of Spain. It should be noted, however, that in the latter period, when some Greeks finally become attracted by the remarkably developing dialectic of the Latin Scholastics, it was mainly for pragmatic reasons: to be able more effectively to oppose the Latins in political and ecclesiastical disputation.

On the other hand, with respect to ancient Latin literature, Planudes aside, there seems to have been very little Greek interest. As pointed out, this may well have been because Latin was far removed from Byzantine civilization. Besides being pagan, the literature was written in a language which had disappeared from the East as a spoken tongue—although originally the speech of the court at

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Miscellaneous fragments of painted window glass, from the Byzantine monastery of the Pantocrator. (Nos. 2, 3, 9B, 14 and 19, colorless; nos. 4, 7, 13, and 24, green; nos. 8, 9A, 10, 15-18, 21A-C, 27, and 28, amber-yellow; nos. 20 and 25, purple-red; no. 23, pink; remainder, blue.) From A. Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* no. 17 (1963), p. 360. Courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, Washington, D.C. (See pp. 25, 79-80, showing possible Byzantine influence on Western stained-glass techniques.)

Constantinople—and was now used in a very corrupt form, the Greeks believed, by the "heretical Franks." Moreover, the Greeks already possessed Greek literature, of which the Latin literature, as even some Latins admitted, was only a pale imitation. The intense Scholastic development of the use of the Aristotelian syllogism in dialectic came as something quite new to Byzantium, and one can therefore understand its attraction for some in the East. Rhetoric, on the other hand, which was prized in Byzantium above all, was already highly developed, perhaps even overly refined. Thus, it is not strange that ancient Latin literature could provide little fresh inspiration for the Byzantine mind.

Given these various considerations, there is no doubt that the Greeks, with very few exceptions, underestimated the level which Latin culture had achieved by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Dante's great *Divine Comedy*, to take but one example, reaches creative heights never approached, I believe, by any Byzantine literary work.⁶⁵ But Greek intellectuals would have nothing to do with the Western vernacular languages. Even the use of their own spoken Greek for literary purposes was by them generally deemed unworthy. And so, with one exception to be cited in chapter 13, it should not be surprising that no other evidence has, so far as I know, been found that Dante's great vernacular work was appreciated or even known to contemporary Byzantine scholars, though Dante, on his part, was unquestionably influenced—if indirectly—by the philosophy of Aristotle and the mysticism of the Byzantine Dionysius the Areopagite. It must be pointed out, on the other hand, that Dante himself—except for a bare mention of Justinian—seems to know nothing of the many remarkable theological, literary, and artistic achievements of Byzantium.

We may now ask the question: how deeply did Latin theological and literary influences actually pervade Byzantine thought of the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries? To a startling and intensive degree, it would seem at first glance. But, one must quickly add, only within a relatively small group, in particular Demetrios Cydones' Thomistic circle at the Byzantine court—and, at that, only temporarily. Most Greeks would have nothing to do with the Latinophile Greek Thomists, though their activities must certainly have had some effect, indirectly at least, on later Greek humanists like Bessarion. That Greek cardinal was impressed by the achievement of Western theology and, as is insufficiently realized, technology,

hoping the latter might somehow be used to save Byzantium from the Turks.⁶⁶ Yet, in the long run, neither Western theology nor Western philosophic ideas were able, in any organic way, to affect Byzantine thought. Its core remained entirely Greek, and what we earlier termed the "nativistic" Greek reaction to Latin influence finally triumphed. Indeed, as we have already shown, the strong attraction that Latin theology exerted on some Byzantines so repelled the majority of Greeks as to make them more conservative, more intransigent than ever, vis-à-vis the Latins.

During the last two or three centuries the Latin presence had virtually saturated the East. Nevertheless, some modern scholars fail to realize the extent of the underlying fear most Greeks had of Western domination, especially the lower classes but a large number of intellectuals and statesmen as well—fear of ultimately losing their identity as a people, in other words, of Latinization. And in view of the great mass of Latins living and working in the East and their pervasive presence in virtually all strata of Byzantine society, it cannot be denied that, though to be sure there were some Latins of good will, the Greek anxieties were far from groundless.⁶⁷ It was, then, the eternal, and admittedly in some ways unjustified, Greek feeling of cultural superiority, and even more, the almost obsessive antipathy toward religious union, itself probably a psychological defense mechanism masking a deeper fear of Latinization—that in the long run prevented Latin culture from making any really permanent inroads into medieval Greek civilization.

After 1453 the Greeks of the homeland, with the notable exception of a few areas under Venetian rule such as Crete and the Ionian isles, remained more than ever attached to their old traditional patterns of thought. Whatever Latin influence remained therefore disappeared, helped partly by the Turkish policy of keeping the Greeks out of contact with the West.⁶⁸ As has not always been realized, when in 1453 Constantinople at last fell to the Turks, the Greek East and the Latin West were cut off from each other as much by mutual distrust as by the Turkish conquest itself. Under such circumstances, any really enduring intellectual and ecclesiastical influences of the Latin West on the Byzantine mind up to 1453, however striking at the moment they occurred, could in the long run be only temporary and of relatively little consequence.

Church Construction and "Caesaropapism" in East and West from Constantine to Justinian

The period from the conversion of Constantine to the death of Justinian is not only that in which the crucial problem of imperial authority over the church became crystallized; it is also one of the formative eras with regard to monumental church building, perhaps the most formative in the history of the church. Each of these questions has been a separate subject of intensive study, but their correlation has been dealt with only cursorily, if at all. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the two considerations in light of each other with the aim of deriving, in different perspective, new insights into the fundamental problem of the relationship of church and state in the early period.

Of the fifteen emperors of the Byzantine East and the somewhat greater number in the West during the time span from A.D. 312 to 565, by far the most important as regards church construction were the first, Constantine the Great, and the last, Justinian. Because of his position as the first Christian Roman emperor, Constantine's desire to commemorate the most sacred shrines of Christianity by monumental church building was only natural. Justinian, the last of this series of emperors, was as great a builder as Constantine, if not greater. And from the viewpoint of political theory, Justinian ruled in the so-called Caesaropapistic tradition established earlier by Constantine. Indeed, Justinian, historians generally agree—even those who dislike the term—was the most "Caesaropapistic" of all Byzantine emperors. In his reign, as we see clearly both from his civil and canon law, the concept of the unity of the empire was constantly emphasized—one church, one state, both under the rule of God's representative or vicegerent on earth, the Basileus. This theory of imperial rule over the Basileia, the Christian empire on earth, in imitation (*mimesis*) of God's rule over the divine order in heaven, was formulated largely by Constantine's adviser, Bishop Eusebius, who

combined elements drawn from Christian, Hellenistic, and Roman concepts and practices.¹

Eusebius, however, did not explicitly spell out all aspects of his theory. Indeed, what to our minds seems to be a blurring of the spheres of church and state, as well as Eusebius's impreciseness with respect to the extent of imperial control over the church, was to remain a basic problem for all later emperors and patriarchs—not to speak of modern historians.²

The problem of establishing a correlation between the degree of the emperor's authority over the church in theory and practice, and the amount and kind of church building accomplished in each reign, is obviously a very complex one. It involves not only the technical problem of the architecture of the churches erected but, more important, the motivations of individual emperors in such construction, and finally, of course, the possible effect of this construction in bringing the church and the faithful more closely under imperial control.

It has been suggested that literary sources are less than adequate in dealing with this problem and that archaeological remains offer perhaps the surest access to imperial church building, confirming or disproving the literary evidence.³ Certainly, it would seem clear that for this period where the monuments are so often dilapidated or even destroyed and where the stones themselves, except through an occasional inscription, cannot speak for the emperor's motivations for building, the architectural evidence must be supplemented from other sources. A complete and balanced view of this difficult question must take into account not only the churches themselves but speeches and letters of the emperors, civil and canon law, contemporary histories, encomia—all with their doctrinal and ideological implications and all, of course, subject to rigorous scrutiny with regard to their reliability. In this chapter, which will focus primarily (but not exclusively) on the two most significant builders and examples of what, rightly or wrongly, is termed Caesaropapism, I shall try to draw from these various sources.

Constantine, in seeking to adjust to the new relationship between the Roman government and the now legally recognized Christian church, established important precedents for subsequent emperors. The reasons for Constantine's conversion to Christianity, are, of course, fundamental to any understanding not only of his policy toward church-state relations but also of his motives in building

churches and shrines. Many scholars, most notably Baynes, believe that Constantine was motivated by sincerity, a sincerity, however, actuated in large part by his need to secure on his side the support of the "right God," a God who could bring him victories over his enemies.⁴ If we accept this view, as I think we can, we should by extension also assume that he would have desired that his chosen God be *properly* worshiped throughout his empire.

The corollary to this theory, that of removing the "wrong" kind of worship, may also be said to have obtained for Constantine. For, in contrast to his apparent building of only two or three pagan temples (that of Tyche, for example, at the time of Constantinople's foundation, and one much later in Umbria, dedicated to his family's genius),⁵ Constantine, as Eusebius points out, constructed a large number of churches with the aim of suppressing pagan worship (for instance, at Marme, in Palestine).⁶ We also know from Eusebius that Constantine "forbade the immoral customs" (temple prostitution) at Heliopolis in Phoenicia, erecting a church there for which he provided a full staff of clergy.⁷ Later in his reign, as attested by an edict of Constantius preserved in the Theodosian Code, Constantine forbade pagan divination under certain conditions.⁸ And it is recorded that occasionally when he needed funds, he would despoil a pagan temple, melting down the gold and silver idols—something there is no record he ever did with respect to the treasures of Christian churches.

Why Constantine, despite his marked partisanship for Christianity, retained the pagan title of Pontifex Maximus, head of the state religion, is not clear. But his policy toward the pagans, which may perhaps best be termed one of grudging, even contemptuous toleration, was doubtless based on the realization that the bulk of the Roman population was still pagan. Eusebius' own attitude toward Constantine's continued toleration of paganism might be interpreted as one of anticipation, that as soon as was feasible he would entirely proscribe it.¹⁰

Regarding right worship *within* the Christian church, Constantine was even less tolerant of heresy than he was of paganism. As Eusebius makes plain in his *Laus Constantini*, Constantine believed that God had appointed him His representative over His earthly kingdom, a fact which, in Constantine's understanding, implied a responsibility to maintain unity in the true faith.¹¹ A letter of Constantine, dated 316,

to his governor, Celsus, in Africa regarding the heretical Donatists of that area clearly indicates what he felt his role to be. Here Constantine announces his intention of using his own authority as emperor to settle the controversy on the spot and to teach the Donatist clergy "what worship and what kind of worship is to be given to the Divinity. . . . Is there anything more consonant with my fixed resolve and *my imperial duty* that I can do, than to scatter errors, extirpate all vain opinions and cause men to offer the Almighty a genuine religion, a sincere *concord* and a worship that is His due?"¹²

In this and similar directives¹³ coming not long after the start of his reign, we can see the shape of a policy toward the church emerging, a policy which for lack of a better term has been called by modern historians, though not by those of medieval Byzantium (who would probably not have understood it) "Caesaropapism."

Constantine's building program would seem to reflect at least one aspect of his control over the church. We know that he confiscated Donatist churches in Africa¹⁴ and, except at the end of his life, when his sympathies for or against Arianism are not always clear, that he probably did not build churches for the Arians. One exception in his policy should be noted, however, that of 330, when with the greatest reluctance he allowed the Donatists to retain a church they had seized in Cirta, Africa.¹⁵ But it is also significant that he rebuilt another in the same area for the Orthodox.¹⁶

There is no doubt that Constantine wanted not only to believe, but to make certain that he had secured the stamp of divine approval for his reign. And, of course, along with his aim of providing at imperial expense larger structures to hold the growing congregations where proper worship could take place, this seeking of divine sanction was probably an underlying motivation for his building of structures to honor the holy martyrs and to enshrine the holy places connected with the life and passion of Christ.¹⁷ The most important churches of Christendom begun or completed by him, especially in Rome, Constantinople, and the Holy Land, are well known to historians—they include St. John's Lateran and St. Peter's in Rome; St. Irene, the first St. Sophia, and at least the foundation of the Church of the Holy Apostles, all in Constantinople; the magnificent churches of Nicomedia and Antioch; and most significant of all for his contemporaries, the churches of the Holy Sepulcher and the Nativity in Palestine. We might at this point make one

supplemental observation: that we seem to hear little of Constantine's church-building activities in Gaul, Spain, and aside from Constantinople, in the Balkans.¹⁸

In the *Vita Constantini*, which despite its detractors I think still offers certain important and acceptable material,¹⁹ Eusebius quotes Constantine as saying that he wanted the building of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Christianity's most sacred shrine, to be more beautiful than any other building in the empire. Constantine also wrote Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, that "a house of prayer worthy of the worship of God should be erected near the Savior's tomb on a scale of rich and royal greatness."²⁰ Besides erecting new churches, Constantine, as we have heard, restored or enlarged older ones. We might make special mention of a letter he sent soon after the Council of Nicaea to his governors and bishops, explicitly directing "the heightening of the oratories and the enlargement in length and breadth of the churches of God" and urging his officials "not to spare the expenditure of money but to draw supplies from the imperial treasury itself."²¹

Whether or not Constantine was personally responsible for adopting the basilica type of church—a thorny problem that we shall avoid examining here—several important factors must have entered into the reasoning behind the decision to adopt this type of building: (1) that the basilica form could be better adapted to the growing congregations of Christians than any other existing type of building; (2) that in the Hellenistic East and pagan Rome the long, rectangular form of building with interior colonnades, called basilica, had long been a standard type of governmental structure.²²

Regarding the first point, we might observe that in paganism, in contrast to Christianity, the worshiper did not enter the temple, the central area of which was generally small and reserved for the god's statue and officiating priests. It is instructive to note that in the sources of the period one often reads of the people's curiosity to enter into the sanctuary of pagan temples to see just what was in there, "to undress the idols," as Eusebius put it. Many pagans were, in fact, surprised that the god did nothing to avenge the sacrilege committed in his temple.²³

With respect to the second fact, it does not have to be pointed out that the term "basilica" comes from the same root as the word *basileus*, meaning emperor, the head of the imperial government. After the period of persecution when the Christians had only just

emerged from the Catacombs, it may not have been illogical—though some historians such as Voelkl would argue otherwise—for Constantine to seek to exalt Christianity as the preferred religion of the state by adapting for Christian use the semiofficial basilica form of building. Eusebius suggests in several passages of the *Laus Constantini* that one of Constantine's underlying aims in building churches in Palestine was through such construction to attribute imperial dignity to Christ. The implication is that the ruler of heaven should not have an earthly temple less regal than the emperor, his vicegerent on earth.²⁴

Why did the bishops of Constantine's reign, Nicene and Arian alike, seem to raise no serious objections to the imposition of Constantine's will on the church? Even Athanasius (that is, before the reign of Constantius) made no real protest, his differences with Constantine apparently being based, rather, on the emperor's seemingly conciliatory attitude toward Arianism, that is, toward false dogma.²⁵ Athanasius, in fact, wanted Constantine to use his imperial authority to the full in order to suppress Arianism. The bishops' acceptance of, or apparent concurrence in, Constantine's authority over the church, was probably based on their need of state support at this crucial period of the church's development, on their gratitude for Constantine's elevation of Christianity to at least the level of the other religions, as well as on their appreciation of the many favors the emperor had lavished upon them, such as relief from curial duties and the grant of extensive properties—not least impressive of which were new churches and shrines.²⁶

From the viewpoint of imperial control, however, there was probably no sharp difference in Constantine's mind between the spheres of church and state. Each was an important aspect of the *Basileia* on earth, over which the emperor ruled as the divinely appointed agent of God. If at times, because of temporary political exigency, Constantine seemed unduly tolerant of the Arians or even of the pagans—not, however, of the Donatists—he never really deviated from his underlying conviction that he was God's vicegerent on earth. And in his church-building program in behalf of the Nicene Orthodox, I think we may see reflected one important side of his concept of stewardship or, if you will, Caesaropapistic control over the church. Constantine's aim of achieving church unity is, to be sure, emphasized by many historians, but the corollary idea should also be emphasized—an idea expressed or implied in Eusebius and

in Constantine's own letters: that it was his explicit *duty* as emperor to proselytize for Christianity and to promote unity within the faith.²⁷

The reigns of Constantine's three sons may, in a sense, be considered an extension of their father's. Constantius, the most important of the three, was, to be sure, an Arian and attempted to force Arian beliefs on the empire.²⁸ But even in his partisanship of Arianism, he was in effect only following his father's policy of seeking to maintain a single faith in the church.

One modern authority has affirmed that the primary reason for Constantius' adoption of Arianism was his conviction that its beliefs would make it easier to accommodate the church to the state.²⁹ Support for such a view may be adduced not only by quoting Athanasius' famous statement, "The Arians have no King but Caesar," but also, by examining what seem to be the implications of the respective Nicene and Arian views toward the Trinity. According to Nicene Trinitarianism, the emperor was considered to represent God the Father. The bishops' power, however, was seen as being on the same plane as the emperor's since their authority was derived from the Logos, by them considered consubstantial with the Father. In the Arian belief, on the other hand, the emperor was viewed as superior to the bishops, since, while his power derived from God, theirs came from the Logos, for them not consubstantial with the Father, thus rendering the bishops' authority inferior to that of the emperor.³⁰ But the main question for us here should be—and in this context this has, so far as I know, too rarely been posed—were these differences in dogmatic implications reflected in church building? With respect to architecture there seems to have been no essential difference between Nicene and Arian churches. The differences appear, rather, in the ornamentation—such as in the mosaics at San Vitale, Justinian's Orthodox church, and Theodoric's Arian church, Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. The pictures we know of in the originally Arian church of Sant' Apollinare emphasize the humanity of Christ, while in those of the Orthodox San Vitale the emphasis is on the otherworldliness, the divinity of the court of heaven as reflected in the earthly court of Justinian.³¹

In any event, in the critical struggle between Arians and Nicenes during the reigns of Constantine's sons, it may be assumed that construction of churches with the government's financial support was one important way the emperor could effectively support the religious group he preferred—a point which, to be sure, seems obvious

and which some scholars have already made. But it would be most useful to scholarship if someone—one scholar has recently attempted to do this for Constantine—would make a careful survey of all the churches erected by each of Constantine's Arian and Nicene sons to ascertain whether this thesis is borne out. From the *Ecclesiastical History* of Socrates we know, for example, that Constantius gave a Mithraeum to the Arian Christians of Alexandria to be used as a church³²—one of the first instances of imperial assignment of a pagan temple for Arian use. Constantius also completed the construction of certain churches begun earlier by his father (one at Antioch) and himself initiated the construction of others, including that of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, though another view has it that this was begun by Constantine.³³ How many of these churches were dedicated by Arian bishops? Did they later have to be reconsecrated by the Orthodox and, if so, were any changes made in them? Though it is difficult to answer these questions satisfactorily, they should at least be raised. Whether or not Constantius destroyed many pagan temples, we know that he was urged to exercise his imperial power to do so by such persons as the senator Julius Firmicus Maternus, who affirmed that "Christ in his graciousness had reserved for the emperor the duty of blotting out idolatry and destroying the pagan shrines."³⁴

To the reign of Julian the Apostate, nephew of Constantine the Great, the Eusebian theory of imperial authority in relation to Christianity is obviously not applicable. He used his imperial authority—at least in the latter part of his reign—rather to destroy the Christian church as an institution and to restore paganism. Sometimes, in fact, it would even seem that he supported a building program favorable to non-Christians in order, obliquely, to strike at the Christian church. We know, of course, that he reopened many pagan temples and restored their revenues.³⁵ It should be noted that as yet Christianity had not gained a complete victory over paganism: Hellenism was still strong and not many pagan temples had been destroyed. The number of those demolished has probably been exaggerated in the dramatic stories that have come down to us concerning the role played by fanatic monks.³⁶ Theodoret, Sozomen, Rufinus, and Ammianus Marcellinus in their histories all speak of Julian's decree that the great Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem should be rebuilt.³⁷ No doubt he acted to placate the Jews; but since Julian is hardly known for his philo-Jewish sentiments, it

may well be suspected that, at least by implication, his decree was intended to denigrate the prestige of Christianity.

Possibly the unique example that can be cited of Julian's church building is that mentioned by Socrates, who tells us that Julian built a church in Constantinople called Anastasia.³⁸ It was constructed on the spot where a Novatian church (called "Alexander's church") had formerly stood. We are also told by Sozomen and Socrates that Julian required the orthodox bishop of Cyzicus to rebuild a Novatian church in his city earlier destroyed by his congregation.³⁹ But, it may be observed, this was a *heretical* Christian church. Julian's policy at this time seems to have been characterized by the sentiment that to prevail over one's enemies one should show favor to all dissident groups, thus serving further to divide them. At any rate, Julian's brief rule was probably too taken up with his campaigns, both military and anti-Christian, to be devoted to any kind of building on a large scale.

It is generally accepted that the definitive triumph of Christianity over paganism occurred in the reign of the emperor Theodosius the Great, a Nicene Christian. While Jovian earlier had revoked Julian's laws against Christianity,⁴⁰ Theodosius in effect dealt the death blow to pagan worship by decreeing that no more sacrifices could take place on pagan altars.⁴¹ And it now became official government policy to begin, or at least to tolerate, the tearing down of pagan temples by Christians.⁴² On the positive side of church construction, however, Theodosius did little building in the first part of his reign, though tradition has it that he did help to rebuild the church of St. Paul-outside-the-Walls of Rome.⁴³

The same Theodosius was involved in two famous clashes with Bishop Ambrose of Milan over the question of imperial authority and its relationship to the church. In the case of greater interest to us here, Ambrose rebuked Theodosius because of his harshness in dealing with the Christians who had burned a Jewish synagogue in Callinicum, near the Persian frontier in Asia Minor. From the evidence of Ambrose's own letters,⁴⁴ it seems that Theodosius intended the synagogue to be rebuilt at the expense of the Christians. Ambrose was not satisfied until Theodosius had halted the imperial investigation of this incident and released the Christians from any obligation. Here, in this clash between emperor and bishop, we see an example of the church itself victoriously exerting pressure so that the ruler would not promote the building of a shrine dedicated to

any religion other than Christianity. Ambrose, in fact, termed Theodosius' intent with respect to the synagogue "apostasy." The signal victory that Ambrose won over imperial power furnished a precedent for church-state relations which was later frequently to be cited by the Western church, although in the East, despite the fame of the incident at the time, the lesson was quickly lost in the face of the great growth of the emperor's power over the church.

A staunch opponent of Arianism, Theodosius nevertheless permitted his Arian Gothic *foederati* to have their own Arian church in Constantinople. This was in line with his policy of conciliation, or accommodation, toward the Goths, since they then constituted a grave threat to the imperial government itself.⁴⁵ Later, when the threat subsided, Patriarch John Chrysostom would refuse to continue this permission, though granting a church to the Goths of the Orthodox faith.⁴⁶

Under Theodosius' sons, Honorius in the West and Arcadius in the East, there was some church building, but certainly nothing to compare with that of Constantine or later of Justinian. On the other hand, in the East under Arcadius we see a considerable amount of church construction on the part of individual patrons other than the emperor, especially his own wife Eudoxia. She contributed to the building of churches in Gaza, particularly the so-called Eudoxiana, for the construction of which (according to the contemporary writer Mark the Deacon) she assigned two hundred pounds of gold out of the revenues of the province of Palestine. This fact would seem to indicate the cooperation at least of the imperial authority in her project.⁴⁷

Mark the Deacon makes an illuminating comment with reference to Arcadius' policy toward the pagans. When Eudoxia interceded in behalf of Porphyry, bishop of Gaza, and requested that Arcadius order the pagan temples of Gaza to be razed and replaced with Christian churches, Arcadius refused. For, though in defiance of the law the people of Gaza were idol-worshippers, they were nevertheless, Arcadius insisted, in the eyes of the imperial government, loyal citizens who paid their taxes regularly. According to Amantius the Chamberlain, who reported this conversation to Mark, the only step Arcadius would take was to agree to the closing of the temples and the removal of pagans from public office, fearing that by too harsh an action he might deprive the state of a good source of revenue. If these reports on Arcadius are accurate, it would seem that